

# **VIRGINIA FIRE PREVENTION & CONTROL PLAN**

## **2008**

**Adopted August 16, 2008**

**Prepared by:**

**Virginia Fire Services Board  
Virginia Department of Fire Program**



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## **1.0: INTRODUCTION**

The original Fire Prevention and Control Plan was created to provide a means to address the problems facing the fire service at the time of its creation. It was an excellent document that addressed fire concerns and resources in all state agencies. Many of the recommendations have been achieved and new challenges have arisen since the documents creation.

Today, through the growth and development of the Virginia Fire Services Board (Board) in their committee process, along with the positive working relationship with the Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP) and the Secretary of Public Safety, there are new means to address most problems facing Virginia's fire service. One of the primary tools used by the Board is the open working committees that allow voices from across the state to be heard. In addition, the Board schedules their own meetings to be held across the state to provide additional opportunities to hear concerns and issues from the fire service.

Presently there are requirements for the Virginia Fire Services Board to create reports on training and other suppression related issues on a regular basis. These reports along with the process of how they are created should stand-alone and not be duplicated in the review of the Fire Prevention and Control Plan.

As such, this document will take on a new look. Many items will stay within the purview of this document and will be overseen by the Fire Prevention and Control Committee. Other items may not be under the purview of the committee, but still of importance to the committee. These items will be addressed by the committee in an expression of support to others with those specific responsibilities. The Fire Prevention and Control Committee and its Chair will oversee the creation of the document and any interim amendments.

## **2.0: HISTORY**

In 1977, the Virginia Advisory Legislative Council examined issues surrounding the coordination of Virginia's fire prevention and protection activities. The Senate Joint Resolution

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requesting the study noted that the state had a serious, but un-quantified fire loss problem. It also noted the absence of “orderly plans for the development of priorities towards reducing fire losses within the Commonwealth.”

To answer this concern the Fire Prevention and Control Plan was published in 1987 by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). The plan was written by DHCD staff from the Office of the State Fire Marshal (SFMO) and Office of Policy Analysis and Research along with staff from the Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP). In addition, there was considerable input from members of the fire service

The 329-page document covered many aspects of the fire service and the problems associated with various issues in the mid 1980’s. Subjects included the collection of fire related data, training and certification, fire safety education, fire codes, fire insurance, arson and telecommunications (Emergency Dispatch Centers).

It is essential to know what has happened in the past as a measuring tool. In June of 1985, a conference was sponsored by the Virginia Department of Fire Programs and the Virginia Fire Services Board in Charlottesville. The purpose of that event was to take a snapshot of Virginia’s Fire Service problems and associated needs as seen through the eyes of those providing emergency response. Their findings rated in order of importance were as follows<sup>1</sup>:

1. Lack of interest in training and education.
2. Lack of knowledge and training, re: handling and production of HAZ/TOXMAT.
3. Greater flexibility in delivery of fire training.
4. Lack of communication with, and education of, policymakers.
5. Why should I participate in state certification?
6. Lack of Regional Training Centers.
7. Fire code deficiencies / lack of fire prevention codes.
8. Fear of mandatory certification.
9. Inadequate funding for HAZ/TOXMAT equipment at all government levels.
10. Inadequate funding for Fire Service Training and Education.
11. Need for qualified fire and EMS Dispatchers.
12. Need for manpower to cover EMS calls during the daylight hours.
13. Training programs area independent of certification programs.
14. Lack of public awareness or actual extent of the fire problem.
15. Identification of areas with HAZ/TOXMAT – factories, industrial parks, etc.
16. Number of hours required to certify as EMT and recertification frequency.
17. Lack of consistency in instruction and testing.
18. Poor public image of fire service resulting from low public awareness.
19. Lack of education in fire services, re; management, budget, politics.
20. Fire department personnel shortage limiting fire prevention / public education effort.
21. Volunteer and career firefighters with different levels of training.
22. Motivation to serve both fire and EMS.
23. Inadequate funding for fire prevention activities.

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<sup>1</sup> Typed in the original report with minor editing

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24. Inadequate commitment by local fire service to fire prevention.
25. Fragmentation of emergency service goals and objectives.
26. Determination of best method for offering state standards to firefighters.
27. Failure to request assistance and cooperation in HAZ/MOXMAT area.
28. Need for more communication and a better working relationship with media.
29. Need for better and more reliable HAZ/TOXMAT equipment.
30. Quality control of patient care (EMS).

Many of the items in the list were not under the purview of the Virginia Department of Fire Programs nor the Virginia Fire Services Board. As such, these issues were passed on to the respective Secretariat for action. Solutions, referred to as “Alternatives,” for those items were not included in the 1987 plan.

After research, meetings and countless hours of preparation the document came down to its last chapter, “Implementing the Fire Prevention and Control Plan.” An important aspect of implementation was the setting of priorities. The alternatives listed were solutions that the Fire Services Board may implement, or not. It should be noted that some items have been implemented partially or fully by either Board action or efforts of the Executive Director(s) of the Virginia Department of Fire Programs. Items listed below reflect actual language as published in 1987.

**1. Collection and Analysis of Fire Related Data**

**a. Increasing participation in the Virginia Fire Incident Reporting System (VFIRS)**

- i. Require participation in VFIRS by statute
- ii. Link receipt of fiscal monies only to VFIRS participants
- iii. Provide additional funding and support to VFIRS participants

**b. Increasing the accuracy, reliability and representativeness of the data**

- i. Automation of collection of data
- ii. Establish data quality control
- iii. Maximize participation to include all types of localities, large and small
- iv. VDFP choosing a sample organizations to represent Virginia and have them participate

**c. Increasing the use and critical analysis of VFIRS data in support of state and local fire programs as well as greater public awareness**

- i. VDFP provide training and technical services on practical and analytical applications.
- ii. VDFP use data as a diagnostic and predictive tool
- iii. Develop application of VFIRS data that have high visibility and increase public awareness

**d. Increasing the integration of fire data from complementary data resources in support of findings based on VFIRS**

**2. Education, Training, and Certification of Fire Service Personnel**

- a. **Establish incentives for individual or departmental participation in fire training, fire education, and fire personnel certification programs (see item d)**
  - b. **Require mandatory completion of basic firefighting training for all firefighters, career and volunteer, on a statewide basis (see item d)**
  - c. **Require mandatory certification of all entry level firefighters, volunteer and career, on a statewide basis (see item d)**
  - d. **Alternatives for all of the above were grouped together as follows:**
    - i. Expanding Opportunities for Training
      - 1. Continue to pursue full implementation of the recommendations in the 1983 master plan
      - 2. Pursue the development of more self-study materials including computerized approaches wherever such packages are appropriate
    - ii. Integrating Available Fire Education Resources
      - 1. Planning for the development of a Virginia Fire Academy should continue now before the needs are critical
      - 2. If academic institutions propose the development of new curricula related to fire prevention and control (i.e.: from a public health, engineering or administrative perspective), the Department should be prepared to participate in any review process prior to their implementation.
    - iii. Improving the Quality and Uniformity of Fire Training
      - 1. Implement the recommendations in the report on fire training and certification developed by the Fire Services Board Committee on Training and Education and adopted by the Board
    - iv. Accommodating Local Fire Training Needs Within a Uniform Framework
      - 1. Recommendations for changes in the structure of fire training programs offered by the Department of Fire Programs or in requirements for greater uniformity in local programs should be flexible enough to accommodate local circumstances.
- 3. Fire Prevention Education for the General Public**
- a. **Gaining More Information About the Scope, Content, and Extent of Fire Education Programs for the Public**
    - i. Conduct a biennial survey of all localities to identify not only the number of education programs but also the type of materials used, the number of individuals reached, and other pieces of information essential to a full understanding of the overall state picture.
  - b. **Determining the Quality of Public Programs**
    - i. The quality of public education programs for fire safety should be evaluated on the basis of their effectiveness as demonstrated by indicators of public response and reductions in casualties and property losses. Support from Fire Programs Fund or other state sources in the future could be conditioned on adequate documentation of the quality and effectiveness of the local programs.

**c. Assuring that Public Education Programs are Uniform and Consistent with the Best Available Knowledge**

- i. VDFP could increase its emphasis on training personnel to become certified fire safety instructors or their civilian equivalent
- ii. VDFP could condition future aid to local efforts at public fire education on the presence of a sufficient number of certified instructional personnel.
- iii. The SFMO and VDFP with participation of other fire related state agencies or divisions, could initiate a thorough review of the current role of fire education in public instruction
- iv. VDFP could initiate more communication among the diverse groups interested in preventing fire casualties and losses through the sponsorship of conferences, seminars, information exchanges, or other means that would target more than the fire service

**d. Supporting Experimental or Pilot Projects Testing the Effectiveness of Public Fire Education Programs**

- i. The Fire Services Board could authorize use of Fire Programs Fund monies to support community scale pilot programs in fire safety education.
- ii. Section 38.2-401 B of the Code could be amended to permit a portion of the “local share” of Fire Programs Fund to be used to support pilot programs in public fire education conducted individually or cooperatively by local fire service organizations
- iii. The Fire Services Board could adopt a position supporting public education programs for fire safety that have demonstrated their effectiveness in changing values and behavior related to fire safety and prevention

**4. Codes and Code Enforcement; the role of Government Regulation in Fire Safety**

**a. Coordination of Building and Fire Codes in Virginia**

- i. Local governments electing to supplement the provisions of the SFPC with more stringent requirements should be careful not to adopt items that could be construed as affecting the materials and methods of construction.
- ii. Where the provisions of the USBC and the SFPC are enforced by different local agencies, the agencies should establish formal relations defining the procedures for coordinating such tasks as plans review or inspections before the local fire prevention code becomes effective.
- iii. The Board of Housing and Community Development (with the cooperation of the Fire Services Board) should update the SFPC at the same time new additions of all other building regulations become effective.
- iv. Section 27-97 of the Code should be amended to require local governments electing to adopt more stringent or extensive fire prevention regulations than those contained in the SFPC should update their locally adopted provisions within six months of the date a new edition of the SFPC becomes effective.

- v. The USBC and the process through which it is developed should remain sensitive to fire safety as one major goal of the building code.
- vi. The training of building inspection personnel should continue to emphasize the identification and application of the fire safety features of the USBC.

**b. Administering the Statewide Fire Prevention Code**

- i. The SFMO should develop an implementation plan for the SFPC that includes procedures for responding to alleged violations and that sets enforcement priorities.
- ii. If, after sufficient time has passed, it becomes clear that the SFPC places greater demands on the SFMO than were originally anticipated, additional staff could be assigned to this enforcement effort. If necessary, staff could be specifically assigned to enforcement of the SFPC or the PBSR in proportion to the inspection effort required by set of regulations.

**c. Regulating Consumer Products in the Interest of Fire Safety**

- i. Legislative or regulatory initiatives affecting the cigarette / upholstered furniture mattress ignition scenario should not be effectuated until after the data and recommendations of the Federal Interagency Committee on Cigarette and Little Cigar Fire Safety have become available as a basis for decision making.
- ii. State action may be redundant or, at any rate, less effective than regulations devised and effective at the national level. Thus, state regulations of consumer products should probably be a last resort in the face of either federal inaction or a specific and serious hazard peculiar to Virginia.

**d. Reducing Residential Fire Casualties Through Regulation**

- i. Smoke Detectors
  - 1. Add Section 36-99.6 to the Code to require the installation of smoke detectors in all residential occupancies regardless of the date of construction. The detectors would be installed in accordance with the provisions of the USBC relating to fire protection systems. Failure to comply with the requirement would constitute a violation of the USBC.
  - 2. The fire service should direct part of its public education effort periodically to reminding the public of the importance of locating detectors properly, maintaining them and testing them regularly.
  - 3. The General Assembly could appropriate funds to support for one year the distribution of smoke detectors to low-income households.
- ii. Sprinkler Systems
  - 1. Mandatory inclusion of residential sprinklers in new residential construction is probably premature at this time. If costs for such systems, in real dollar terms, continue to decline, however, enough community support may eventually be present to make such a requirement feasible in the future.
  - 2. The Board of Housing and Community Development, or the Fire Services Board, or both Boards jointly, could sponsor a detailed

examination of the cost and life safety issues associated with the installation of 13D systems. Uniform recommendations concerning appropriate trade-offs or modifications in single-family, multi-family, and other occupancies could result from this study.

- iii. Other Fire Safety Devices
  - 1. The fire service could serve as a conduit for informing the public of the potential benefits or deficits of such other fire safety innovations.
- iv. Eliminating Barriers to the Installation of Fire Protection Systems
  - 1. VDFP, SFMO and the Health Department (responsible for waterworks regulations) could sponsor a joint research effort to establish the effects of meter requirements and other water related factors on decisions to install fire suppression systems. In addition, the research could consider the effects--if any--of fire suppression systems on local water supplies.
  - 2. Recommendations for uniform waterworks regulations relating to the issue of fire lines and local water supply systems could be one product of this research effort.

## **5. Fire Insurance**

### **a. Economic Incentives for Fire Prevention and Control**

- i. The state could consider offering incentives via the tax structure to insurers--through their rate structure or policy requirements--incentives for proven and effective fire prevention features. Rebates could be based on consumer response to the incentives.
- ii. State laws regulating fire policies could be changed to discourage overly prompt payment of claims for suspicious fires. Alternately, penalties could be applied to insurers settling too promptly on fires that subsequently are revealed as arson for profit incidents.

### **b. Assuring that Rate Making Considers Fire Prevention as Well as Fire Suppression**

- i. Insurance companies should make adjustments and reductions in insurance rates based on fire prevention efforts.

### **c. Assuring an Improved Data Base for Objective Rate Setting.**

- i. The Department of Fire Programs, the Bureau of Insurance, the State Fire Marshal, and the insurance industry in Virginia could begin exploring the possibilities for developing the kind of information that would support more refined ratemaking.

## **6. Arson and Arson Investigations**

### **a. Improved Reporting, Data Collection, and Analysis**

- i. The possibility of building a better database on arson in the Commonwealth provides one more strong argument for encouraging full participation by the state's fire service in the VFIRS program.

- ii. Modify VFIRS and local reporting forms and standards to permit the inclusion of juvenile involvement in fire setting regardless of whether a fire was accidental or hostile and intentional.
- b. Encouraging the Use of Uniform Terminology**
  - i. The fire service should be encouraged to employ the NFPA 901 terminology in its reporting of incendiary fires, reserving the term "arson" for use in a manner consistent with its legal definition wherever possible.
- c. Appropriate Training for Arson Related Personnel**
  - i. Basic training for fire fighters could emphasize to a greater degree the significance of arson as a fire cause and the importance of individual fire fighter's actions in detecting arson and preserving evidence.
  - ii. Fire command training should alert company and battalion level officers to importance of their role in facilitating the work of arson investigation.
- d. Support for Analytical Laboratory Facilities.**
  - i. The fire service should support the maintenance of adequate funding for the state's analytical laboratory facilities.
- e. Economic Disincentives Against Arson**
  - i. The State Corporation Commission could consider requiring insurers to develop and submit arson abatement strategies as a condition of doing business in the Commonwealth. Individual insurers or the domestic and foreign fire and multi peril line insurers collectively could submit such plans. Adherence to the procedures and policies contained in the plans would be expected, and the plans could contain recommendations for legislative action to facilitate insurers in resisting the effects of arson.
  - ii. Amend the insurance laws of the Commonwealth relating to claims settlement to make clear the public interest in preventing premature payment of claims in auspicious fire incidents.
- f. Increasing Public Awareness of Arson**
  - i. Instead of using National Fire Prevention Week as a period in which to promote fire prevention generally, local or even the state's fire service organizations might elect to emphasize prevention of one particular class of fire--such as arson--during a given year.
  - ii. Specific programs targeting those groups responsible for a disproportionate percentage of incendiary fires, particularly juveniles, might be appropriate.
- g. Support for Local Arson Prevention Programs**
  - i. Arson prevention demonstration programs in communities with an unusually high number or rate of arson and other incendiary fires could become eligible for state assistance via the fire program fund or through direct state funding via the Department of Criminal Justice Services.
- h. Enhancing the Legal and Judicial Climate Against Arson**
  - i. Amend Title 18.2, Chapter 5, Article 1 of the Code to eliminate the distinction between nighttime and daytime arson, as well as some of the other distinctions that defeat the essential purpose of arson statutes--the creation of penal disincentives for incendiarism.

**7. Public Safety Telecommunications**

**a. Expanding Coverage by 911 and E-911 Systems**

- i. Recommend that Planning District Commissions promote interregional development and implementation of 911 systems by coordinating and carrying out essential street naming and numbering programs with the cooperation of their constituent localities.
- ii. Encourage local governments to use the provisions of the Area Development Act (Title 15.1, Chapter 34 Code of Virginia) to permit some or all Planning District Commissions to develop and implement emergency services 911 telephone systems on an area wide basis. This could be accomplished either directly through the grant of general powers to Commissions granted in 15.1-1405 or through the establishment of a service district under Article 3 of this chapter.

**b. Assuring Fire Service Participation in 911 Systems**

- i. It should be the established policy of the fire service at all levels to support the implementation of basic and enhanced 911 emergency service telephone numbers throughout the Commonwealth, and all local fire service organizations-regardless of their governmental or non-governmental status should cooperate in the design and installation of such systems.
- ii. One way to further both the implementation of 911 systems and also involve the fire service would be for local departments and appropriate state agencies to participate in the activities of the National Emergency Number Association.

**c. Maintaining Universal Telephone Service**

- i. Industry must provide affordable phone service for residences

**d. Upgrading Radio Communications**

- i. The Fire Services Board, Criminal Justice Services Board, and the Department of Emergency Services could consider joint development of certification standards for local dispatchers serving multiple emergency service agencies.
- ii. The Fire Services Board, Criminal Justice Services Board, the Department of Health (EMS unit), and the Department of Emergency Services could jointly sponsor a full review of fire communications, its relationship to other emergency service communications, and specific problems related to channel crowding, interagency communications, improper use of radio procedures, and other issues of mutual concern. Ultimately, a fire communications development plan could be prepared to meet the needs illuminated by such a study

Through the efforts of the Fire Services Board, the Executive Director(s) of the Virginia Department of Fire Programs, the Department of Housing and Community Development as well as other agencies, some of these items have been endorsed, enacted and enhanced. Many items are just as viable today, more than 20 years later, as they were when proposed.

### **3.0: VIRGINIA TODAY**

This chapter will address the organization of the fire service at the state level and the partnerships with fellow agencies and organizations. A cooperative effort between all the entities has enabled great strides in providing better service to Virginia's fire services which in turn has provided better service to Virginia's citizens.

#### **3.1: Virginia Fire Services Board**

The Virginia Fire Services Board (VFSB) is the policy making board within the Virginia Department of Fire Programs. It was created pursuant to §9-153.1 of the Code of Virginia. The Board is comprised of 15 members appointed by the Governor to represent various fire service organizations throughout Virginia, as well as the general public.

Board members include the following individuals:

- An appointed representative of the insurance industry
- Two appointed members of the general public with no connection to the fire services, one of which shall be a representative of those industries affected by SARA Title III and OSHA training requirements
- State Fire Marshal
- State Forester
- A member of the Board of Housing and Community Development, to be appointed by the chairman of that Board.
- A member of the Virginia Chapter of the International Society of Fire Service Instructors who is a faculty member who teaches fire science at a state institution of higher learning

There shall be at least one representative from each of the following organizations:

- Virginia Fire Chiefs Association
- Virginia State Firefighters Association
- Virginia Professional Firefighters Association
- Virginia Fire Service Council
- Virginia Fire Prevention Association
- Virginia Chapter of the International Association of Arson Investigators
- Virginia Municipal League
- Virginia Association of Counties

Of these appointees, at least one must be a volunteer firefighter. Each of the organizations represented submits names for the Governor's consideration in making these appointments.

The members of the Board appointed by the Governor serve for terms of four years. No appointee serves more than two successive four-year terms or serves beyond the time he or she holds the office or organizational membership through which he or she was initially eligible for

appointment. The Board annually elects its chairman and vice-chairman from among its membership and adopts rules of procedure. The Chair will appoint Committee Chairs for the Fire Education & Training Committee, the Fire Prevention and Control Committee and the Finance, Policy and Finance Committee.

Each committee has a specific assignment. The committee is made up of members of the Board. They hear business and make motions on various issues within their purview. These motions are then brought forward on the next day at the full meeting of the Virginia Fire Services Board. The Committee functions are as follows:

### **3.1.2: Fire Education & Training Committee**

The Committee on Fire Education and Training shall be responsible for providing information and making recommendations to the Virginia Fire Services Board on developing a five-year (5) statewide plan for fire education and training, providing technical assistance and advice to local fire departments and fire service organizations and local governments; developing personnel standards for fire service personnel; providing criteria for training schools for fire service personnel and rendering assistance to local fire departments and volunteer fire companies in training firefighters.

### **3.1.3: Fire Prevention and Control Committee**

The Committee on Fire Prevention and Control shall be responsible for providing information and making recommendations to the Virginia Fire Services Board on developing and updating the Virginia Fire Prevention and Control plan; developing a statewide plan for the collection, analysis and reporting of data in relation to fires in the Commonwealth; evaluating all state programs or functions which have a bearing on fire prevention and evaluating the training and information relative to the Statewide Fire Prevention Code.

#### **3.1.3.1: Fire Code Development Sub-Committee**

The Chair of the Fire Prevention and Control Committee shall appoint members of a subcommittee that will act on behalf of the Board for the promulgation of the Statewide Fire Prevention Code. The Fire Prevention and Code Committee will dictate the number of subcommittee members and shall appoint a Chair or Co-Chairs as may be necessary. The subcommittee shall report their findings and status of their efforts to the Fire Prevention and Control Committee, at each of the Fire Prevention and Control Committee regular meetings.

### **3.1.4: Administration, Policy & Finance Committee**

This committee shall provide information and make recommendations to the Board on administrative, legislative and policy matters relating to Virginia's Fire Services. The committee will also make recommendations on financial matters including but not limited to, Fire Programs Fund, grant funds, special request of committees and financial conditions within the Agency. The Chair of this committee will be the Vice Chair of the Board.

#### **3.1.4.1: Burn Building Subcommittee**

The Chairman of Virginia Fire Services Board or the Chairman Pro-Tem shall appoint, as the need arises, a Burn Building subcommittee, and chair, to address burn building issues. This committee shall consist of members of the Virginia Fire Services Board. Their findings shall be reported to the Committee on Administration, Policy and Finance.

#### **3.1.5: Fire Board Sub-Committees**

The Chairman of Virginia Fire Services Board or the Chairman Pro-Tem shall appoint, as the need arises, special committees that go out of existence when relieved by the Chairman or when their task is completed and a final report is submitted. The Nomination Committee and an Election Committee are such committees.

#### **3.1.6 Executive Committee**

The Virginia Fire Services Board will have a leadership Executive Committee which shall be comprised of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board along with the three Committee Chairs for the Fire Education and Training Committee, Fire Prevention and Control Committee, and the Administration, Policy and Finance Committee. Although there are no scheduled meetings for this committee, the Chair may convene meetings as necessary to discuss leadership issues or policies that may impact the Board.

### **3.2: Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VD FP)**

The Virginia Department of Fire Programs is a state agency, reporting to the Secretary of Public Safety. The agency's two primary functions are to distribute the Fire Programs Fund and to provide training to Virginia's firefighters. There are several other roles that the agency undertakes as part of their role in state government and in carrying out the policies established by the Virginia Fire Services Board.

#### **3.2.1: Executive Director**

The Virginia Department of Fire Programs has an appointed Executive Director (ED) who oversees the entire operations of the agency. In addition to other duties prescribed by the state, the ED sits on several Executive level committees that address issues dealing with Public Safety and Commonwealth Preparedness. Serving under the Executive Director are four Branch Chiefs (classified employees).

#### **3.2.2: Training and Operations**

The Branch Chief for Training and Operations oversees the seven Division offices in the state. Each Division Office has a Division Chief and staff that provides funded training, within budget guidelines, for the fire departments within that Division. They establish, train with adjunct instructors, and document schools for a full range of suppression training topics.

### **3.2.3: Training and Technical Services**

The Branch Chief for Training and Technical Services (TTS) oversees the training specialty units for the state. These Program areas each consist of a Program Chief and staff as necessary. These technical programs include Airport Rescue Fire Fighting, Heavy Technical Rescue, Incident Management Systems and the Virginia Fire Marshal Academy. Also within TTS is the Course Development and Quality Assurance Program which has a wide range of duties including the establishment of guidelines for course development and delivery; assisting all the Division Chiefs and Programs Chiefs; creation and management of the Fire Service Training Record System; the Webpage and information technology for the agency. The National Professional Qualifications Board certification program and the ACE accreditation program are run out of this unit as well.

### **3.2.4: Administration**

The Branch Chief for Administration oversees the administrative functions of the agency through managers covering Fiscal Management, Statistical Analysis, Marketing and a manager for Policy, Planning & Legislative Affairs. Other duties within Administration are Bookstore Operations and Grants Management. One of the primary duties of the Administrative Branch is the disbursement of the Fire Programs fund as well as other Grant Programs. In particular, the agency has been quite successful with specialized programs such as the Smoke detector and CO<sub>2</sub> detector programs, providing these devices to localities for disbursement and installation in homes across the state.

### **3.2.5: State Fire Marshal's Office**

The State Fire Marshal Office transfers to the Virginia Department of Fire Programs effective July 1, 2008. The State Fire Marshal reports to the Executive Director, as a Branch Chief. His staff consists of a Headquarters group with five Regional Offices. The Regional Offices conduct fire inspections in localities that do not have their own fire code official, conduct plans review and construction inspections for fire safety systems in state buildings, provide assistance to local building and fire code officials, and respond to complaints and questions from private citizens. The office also inspects student residence facilities (dorms) for state colleges and universities and state owned residential care buildings.

As required by the Code of Virginia §27-97, the Virginia State Fire Marshal's Office (SFMO) issues permits for the storage, use, and sale of explosives in areas with no local enforcement. This includes investigation of complaints.

## **Chapter 3.3: Virginia Fire Experience**

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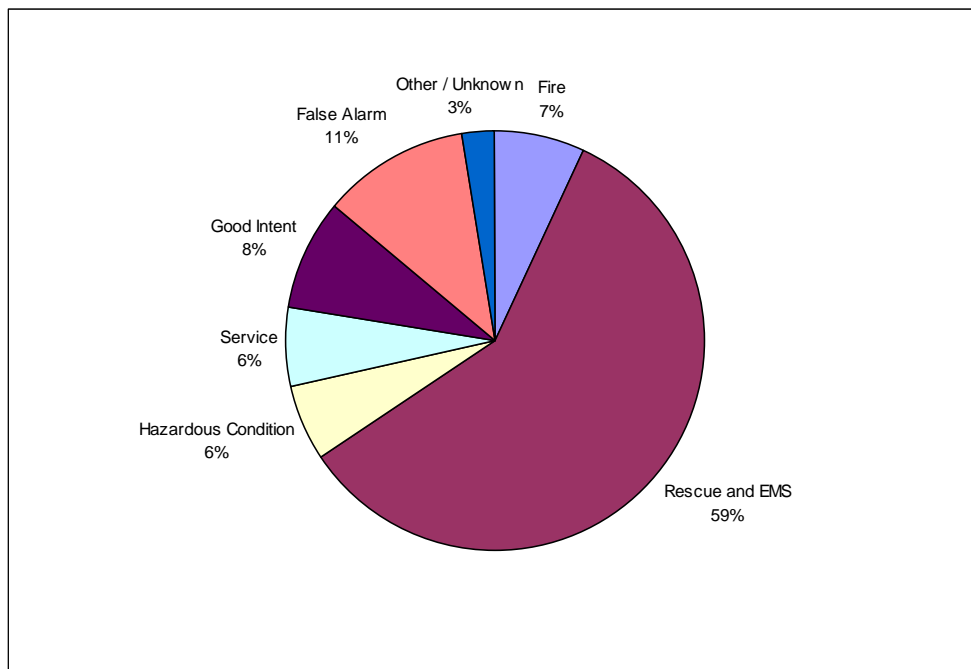
The Fire Services Board recognizing the importance of fire statistics had listed in the original Fire Prevention and Control Plan the necessity for all fire departments to report fire incident data. Over the years, they also made funds available through a grant system to provide computers to local fire departments and fire stations for the collection of this data for use in statistical analysis.

Accurate statistical data is crucial in future legislation to provide for the fire service. It will also provide the necessary facts to support fire prevention measures that are crucial to the prevention of fires and the ultimate prevention of injuries as well as saving lives. This data is also necessary to provide for the justification of local funds to support fire department operations, in particular suppression forces.

### **3.3.1: 2007 Statistical Analysis**

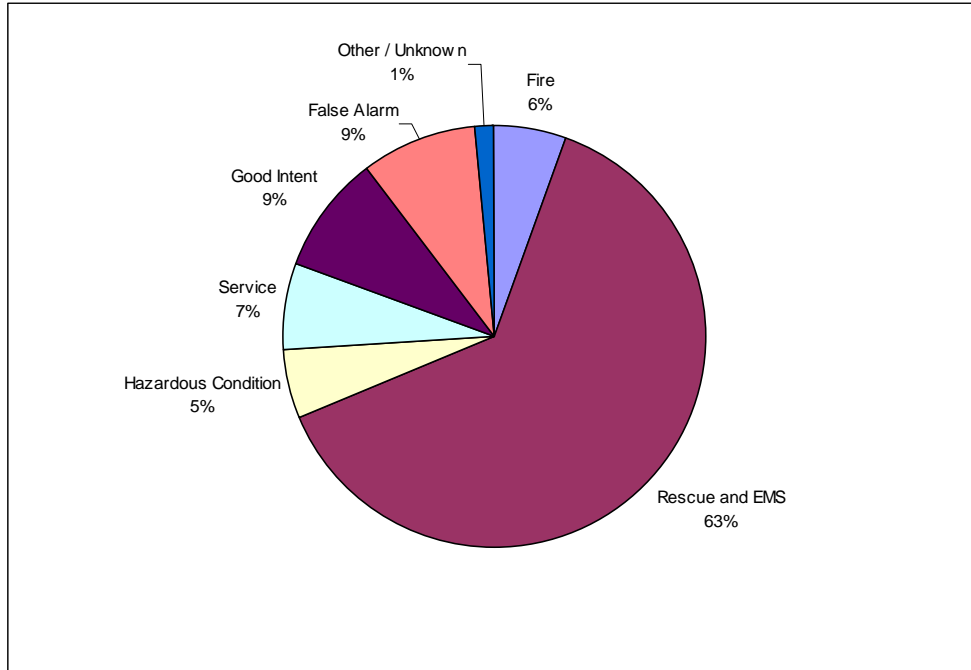
Virginia's Fire departments respond to many types of calls for assistance in addition to fire calls. In 2007, departments responded to a total of 601,801 response calls; 33,556 were fires; 379,656 were rescue/medical incident calls; 32,083 were hazardous condition calls; 39,855 were service calls; 54,761 were good intent calls; 53,615 were false calls; and 8,275 were other calls.

**Incident Types in Virginia, 2000**

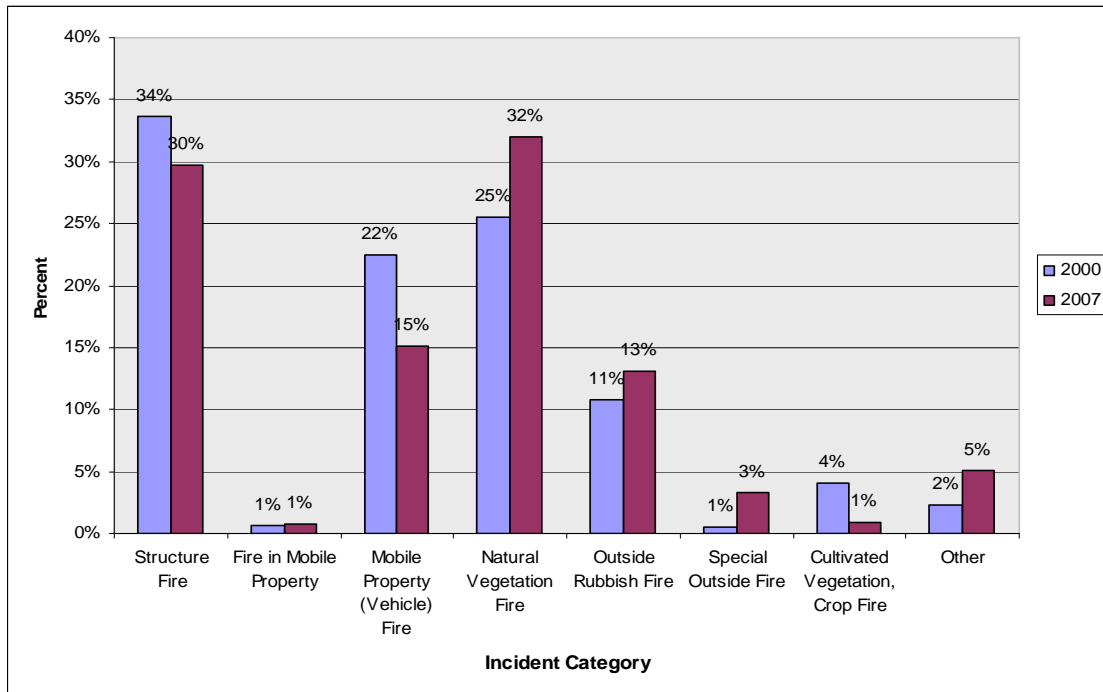


**Incident Types in Virginia, 2007**

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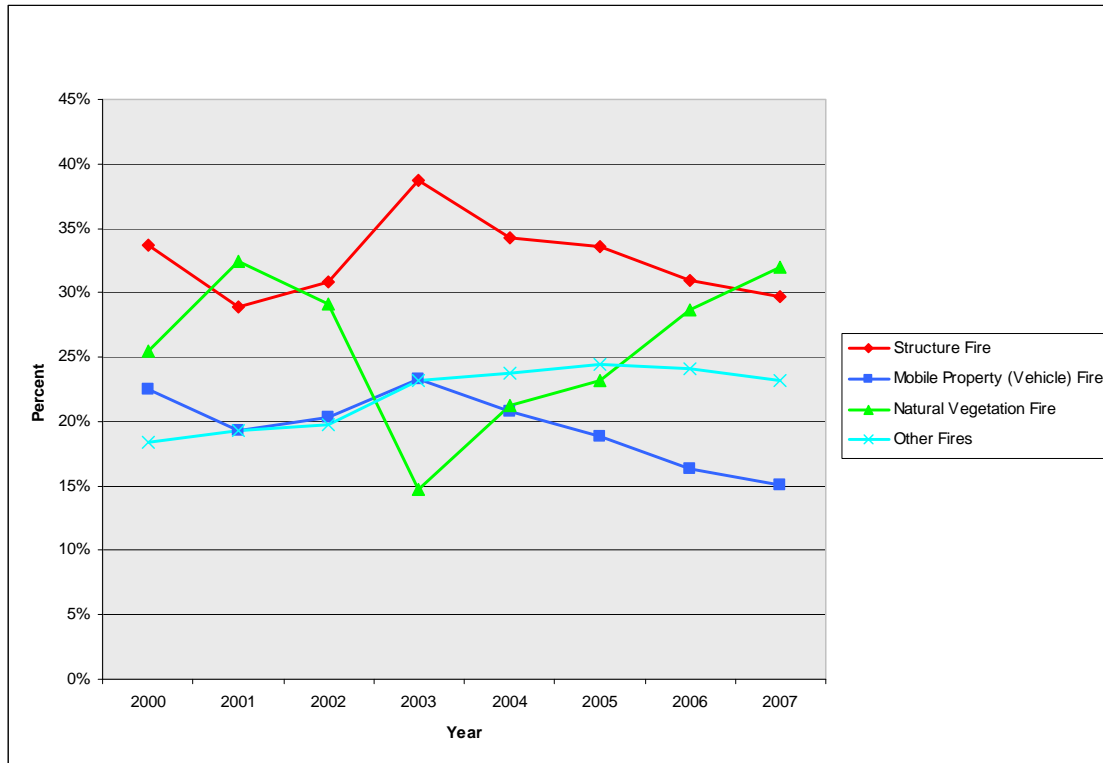


**Fire Incidents Comparison by Year in Virginia**



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**Fire Incident Trends in Virginia, 2000-2007**

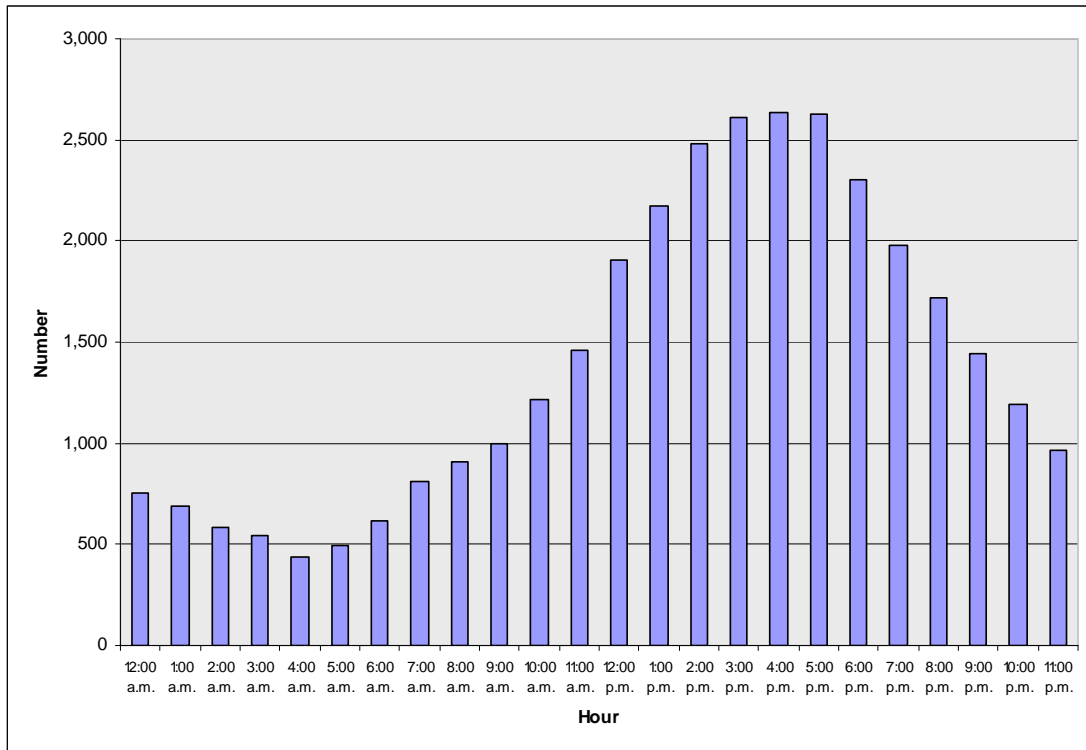


**Fire Incidents Data by Virginia Region, 2007<sup>†</sup>**

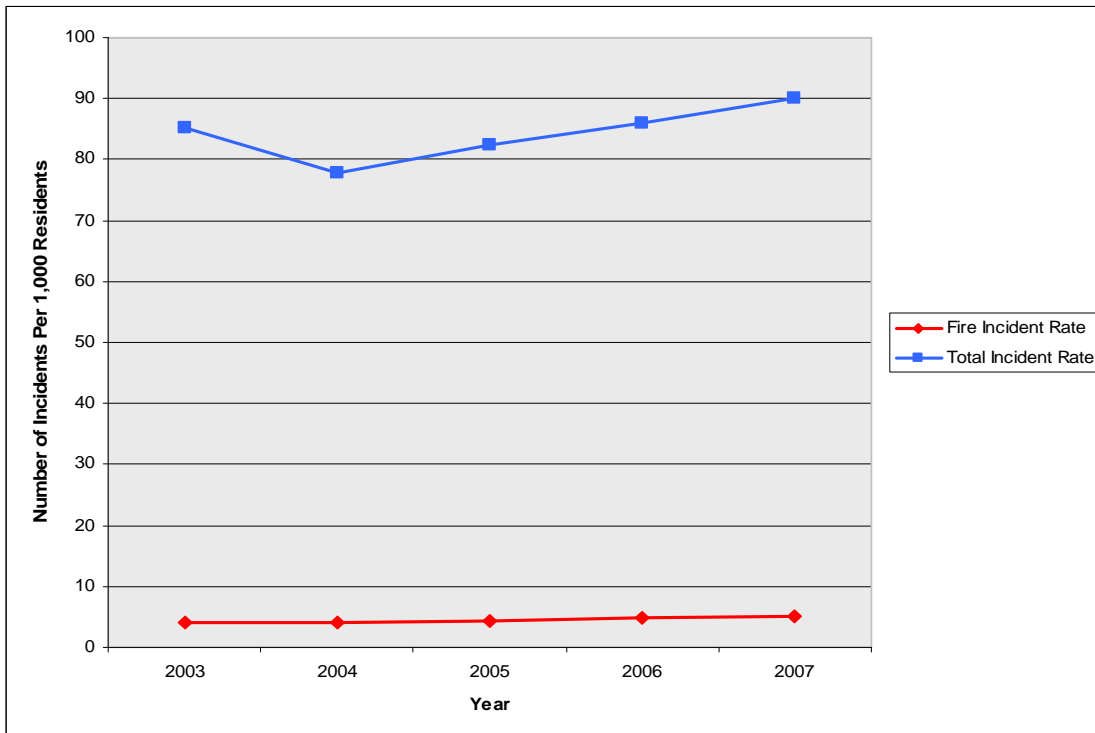
VA Region	Fires	Mutual Aid Given	Exposures	Total	Total Dollar Loss	Civilian and Fire Service Injuries	Civilian and Fire Service Deaths
Central	11,410	2,387	267	14,064	\$84,553,156	252	38
Coastal	8,032	787	220	9,039	\$82,705,952	186	16
Mountain	3,227	702	25	3,954	\$24,183,907	53	18
Northern	6,909	1,570	97	8,576	\$113,597,481	49	6
Valley	3,791	2,119	71	5,981	\$19,515,238	84	5
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>33,369</b>	<b>7,565</b>	<b>680</b>	<b>41,614</b>	<b>\$324,555,734</b>	<b>624</b>	<b>83</b>

**2008 Fire Prevention & Control Plan**  
**Virginia Fire Services Board and the Virginia Department of Fire Programs**

**Fire Incidents by Hour in Virginia, 2007**



**VFIRS Incident Rates, Virginia, 2003-2007**



**2008 Fire Prevention & Control Plan**  
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**VFIRS Incident Rate Summary, Virginia, 2003-2007 \***

Year	Number of Fires	Total Number of Incidents	VFIRS Participation	Fire Incident Rate Per 1,000 Residents	Total Incident Rate Per 1,000 Residents
2003	22,674	483,819	80.3%	4.0	85.1
2004	25,447	494,711	89.8%	4.0	77.8
2005	27,653	540,188	92.5%	4.2	82.5
2006	31,570	565,061	92.8%	4.8	86.0
2007	33,543	601,801	94.3%	5.0	90.2

\* Incident Rates were calculated based on the 2000 U.S. Census Population for Virginia.

**Fire Incidents by Top 5 Property Use, Virginia, 2007**

Property Series	Property Use	Total	Percent of Series *
<b>Assembly</b>	Restaurant or cafeteria	253	32.19%
	Playground	102	12.98%
	Church, mosque, synagogue, temple, chapel	85	10.81%
	Airport passenger terminal	69	8.78%
	Eating, drinking places	33	4.20%
<b>Educational</b>	High school/junior high school/middle school	104	35.62%
	Elementary school, including kindergarten	78	26.71%
	Adult education center, college classroom	43	14.73%
	Schools, non-adult	26	8.90%
	Educational, other	18	6.16%
<b>Health Care, Detention, and Correction</b>	24-hour care Nursing homes, 4 or more persons	88	35.63%
	Hospital - medical or psychiatric	49	19.84%
	Clinics, Doctors offices, hemodialysis centers	31	12.55%
	Health care, detention, & correction, other	16	6.48%
	Doctor, dentist or oral surgeon's office	15	6.07%
<b>Residential</b>	1 or 2 family dwelling	8,415	71.75%
	Multifamily dwellings	2,479	21.14%
	Residential, other	535	4.56%
	Hotel/motel, commercial	159	1.36%
	Boarding/rooming house, residential hotels	47	0.40%
<b>Mercantile, Business</b>	Food and beverage sales, grocery store	209	15.61%
	Business office	171	12.77%
	Mercantile, business, other	164	12.25%
	Service station, gas station	117	8.74%
	Motor vehicle or boat sales, services, repair	101	7.54%
<b>Industrial, Utility, Defense, Agriculture, Mining</b>	Forest, timberland, woodland	517	65.86%
	Crops or orchard	62	7.90%
	Utility, defense, agriculture, mining, other	51	6.50%
	Electrical distribution	39	4.97%
	Livestock production	31	3.95%
<b>Manufacturing, Processing</b>	Manufacturing, processing	258	100.00%
<b>Storage</b>	Outbuilding or shed	329	41.49%
	Outside material storage area	78	9.84%
	Parking garage, (detached residential garage)	74	9.33%
	Storage, other	73	9.21%
	Warehouse	71	8.95%
<b>Outside or Special Property</b>	Open land or field	3,473	22.32%
	Residential street, road or residential driveway	2,164	13.91%
	Vehicle parking area	2,145	13.79%
	Highway or divided highway	2,003	12.87%
	Outside or special property, other	1,559	10.02%

\* Percent is based on the total number of incidents from each Property Use Series category and not the numbers shown above for each Top 5 listing.

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**Building Fire Incidents by Top 5 Area of Fire Origin  
and Property Use Series, Virginia, 2007**

Property Series	Area of Fire Origin	Total	Percent of Series *
Assembly	Cooking area, kitchen	35	24.31%
	Bathroom, checkroom, lavatory, locker room	12	8.33%
	Undetermined	10	6.94%
	Roof surface: exterior	8	5.56%
	Assembly area - less than 100 persons	6	4.17%
Educational	Bathroom, checkroom, lavatory, locker room	13	20.00%
	Roof surface: exterior	4	6.15%
	Ceiling & floor assembly, crawl space b/t stories	4	6.15%
	Undetermined	3	4.62%
	Other	3	4.62%
	Assembly area - less than 100 persons	3	4.62%
	Wall surface: exterior	3	4.62%
	Corridor, mall	3	4.62%
Health Care, Detention, and Correction	Laundry area, wash house (laundry)	11	19.30%
	Bedroom - < 5 persons; included are jail or prison	9	15.79%
	Cooking area, kitchen	5	8.77%
	Switchgear area, transformer vault	3	5.26%
	Bathroom, checkroom, lavatory, locker room	3	5.26%
	Office	3	5.26%
	Equipment or service area, other	3	5.26%
Residential	Cooking area, kitchen	1,238	25.25%
	Undetermined	559	11.40%
	Bedroom - < 5 persons; included are jail or prison	501	10.22%
	Laundry area, wash house (laundry)	206	4.20%
	Attic: vacant, crawl space above top story, cupola	184	3.75%
Mercantile, Business	Laundry area, wash house (laundry)	21	8.27%
	Undetermined	20	7.87%
	Wall surface: exterior	19	7.48%
	Cooking area, kitchen	18	7.09%
	Office	13	5.12%
Industrial, Utility, Defense, Agriculture, Mining	Undetermined	14	28.57%
	Equipment or service area, other	6	12.24%
	Storage area, other	5	10.20%
	Other	4	8.16%
	Machinery room or area; elevator machinery room	3	6.12%
	Switchgear area, transformer vault	3	6.12%
Manufacturing, Processing	Processing/manufacturing area, workroom	15	17.05%
	Machinery room or area; elevator machinery room	12	13.64%
	Equipment or service area, other	9	10.23%
	Duct: hvac, cable, exhaust, heating, or AC	8	9.09%
	Undetermined	6	6.82%
Storage	Undetermined	120	26.55%
	Storage area, other	64	14.16%
	Vehicle storage area; garage, carport	53	11.73%
	Storage: supplies or tools; dead storage	38	8.41%
	Other	22	4.87%
Outside or Special Property	Undetermined	35	33.33%
	Storage: supplies or tools; dead storage	7	6.67%
	Other	4	3.81%
	Storage area, other	4	3.81%
	Vehicle storage area; garage, carport	3	2.86%
	Substructure area or space, crawl space	3	2.86%
	Roof surface: exterior	3	2.86%
	Vehicle area, other	3	2.86%
	Railroad right of way: on or near	3	2.86%
	Open area - outside; included are farmland, field	3	2.86%
	Vacant structural area	3	2.86%

\* Percent is based on the total number of incidents from each Property Use Series category and not the numbers shown above for each Top 5 listing.

**2008 Fire Prevention & Control Plan**  
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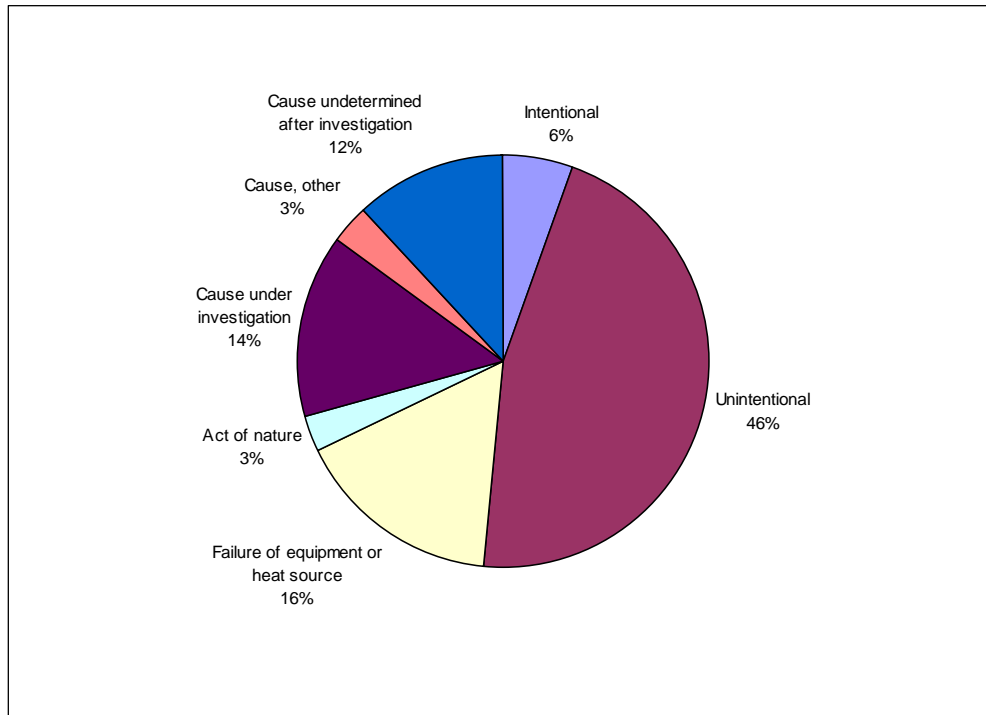
**Building Fire Incidents by Top5 Heat Source and Property Use Series, Virginia, 2007**

Property Series	Heat Source	Total	Percent of Series *
Assembly	Undetermined	41	28.28%
	Heat from powered equipment, other	24	16.55%
	Arcing	18	12.41%
	Radiated, conducted heat from operating equipment	14	9.66%
	Spark, ember or flame from operating equipment	9	6.21%
Educational	Undetermined	21	31.34%
	Arcing	15	22.39%
	Heat from powered equipment, other	7	10.45%
	Spark, ember or flame from operating equipment	5	7.46%
	Hot or smoldering object, other	4	5.97%
Health Care, Detention, and Correction	Heat from powered equipment, other	14	24.56%
	Undetermined	12	21.05%
	Radiated, conducted heat from operating equipment	9	15.79%
	Arcing	7	12.28%
	Cigarette lighter	4	7.02%
Residential	Undetermined	1,485	30.32%
	Radiated, conducted heat from operating equipment	758	15.48%
	Arcing	519	10.60%
	Heat from powered equipment, other	499	10.19%
	Hot or smoldering object, other	286	5.84%
Mercantile, Business	Undetermined	81	32.02%
	Heat from powered equipment, other	37	14.62%
	Arcing	31	12.25%
	Radiated, conducted heat from operating equipment	27	10.67%
	Heat source: other	13	5.14%
Industrial, Utility, Defense, Agriculture, Mining	Undetermined	17	34.69%
	Heat from powered equipment, other	6	12.24%
	Arcing	6	12.24%
	Radiated, conducted heat from operating equipment	6	12.24%
	Spark, ember or flame from operating equipment	4	8.16%
Manufacturing, Processing	Undetermined	29	32.58%
	Radiated, conducted heat from operating equipment	12	13.48%
	Spark, ember or flame from operating equipment	11	12.36%
	Heat from powered equipment, other	10	11.24%
	Hot or smoldering object, other	7	7.87%
Storage	Undetermined	207	46.00%
	Hot ember or ash	26	5.78%
	Arcing	22	4.89%
	Radiated, conducted heat from operating equipment	21	4.67%
	Hot or smoldering object, other	21	4.67%
Outside or Special Property	Undetermined	59	55.66%
	Heat source: other	9	8.49%
	Radiated, conducted heat from operating equipment	7	6.60%
	Heat from other open flame or smoking materials	5	4.72%
	Heat from powered equipment, other	4	3.77%
	Arcing	4	3.77%
	Spark, ember or flame from operating equipment	4	3.77%

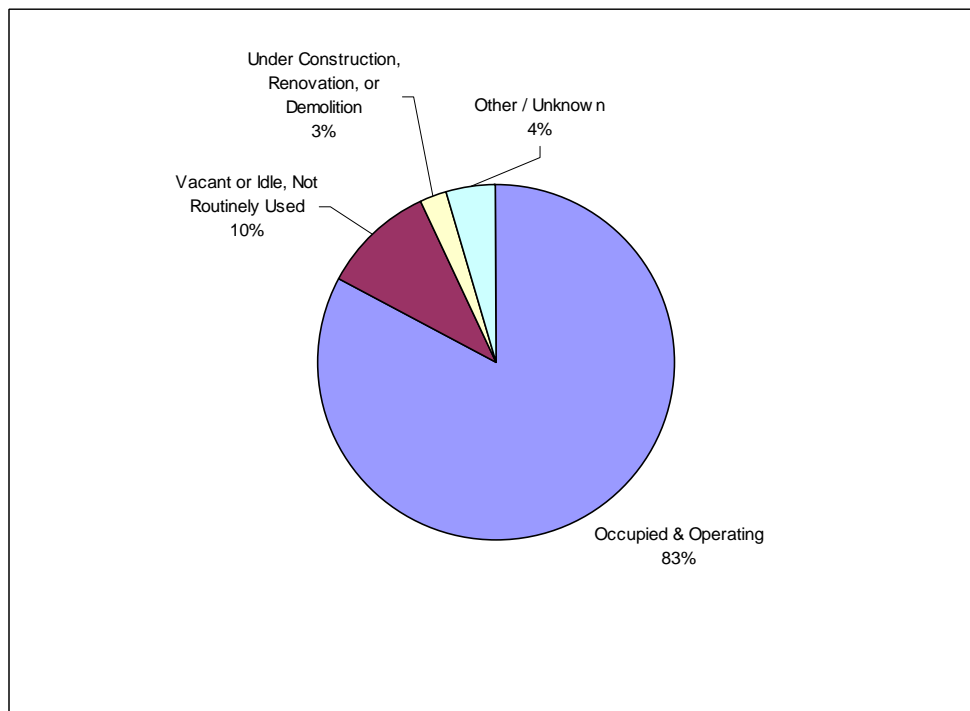
\* Percent is based on the total number of incidents from each Property Use Series category and not the numbers shown above for each Top 5 listing.

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**Cause of Ignition with Building Fires, Virginia, 2007**



**Building Status with Building Fires, Virginia, 2007**

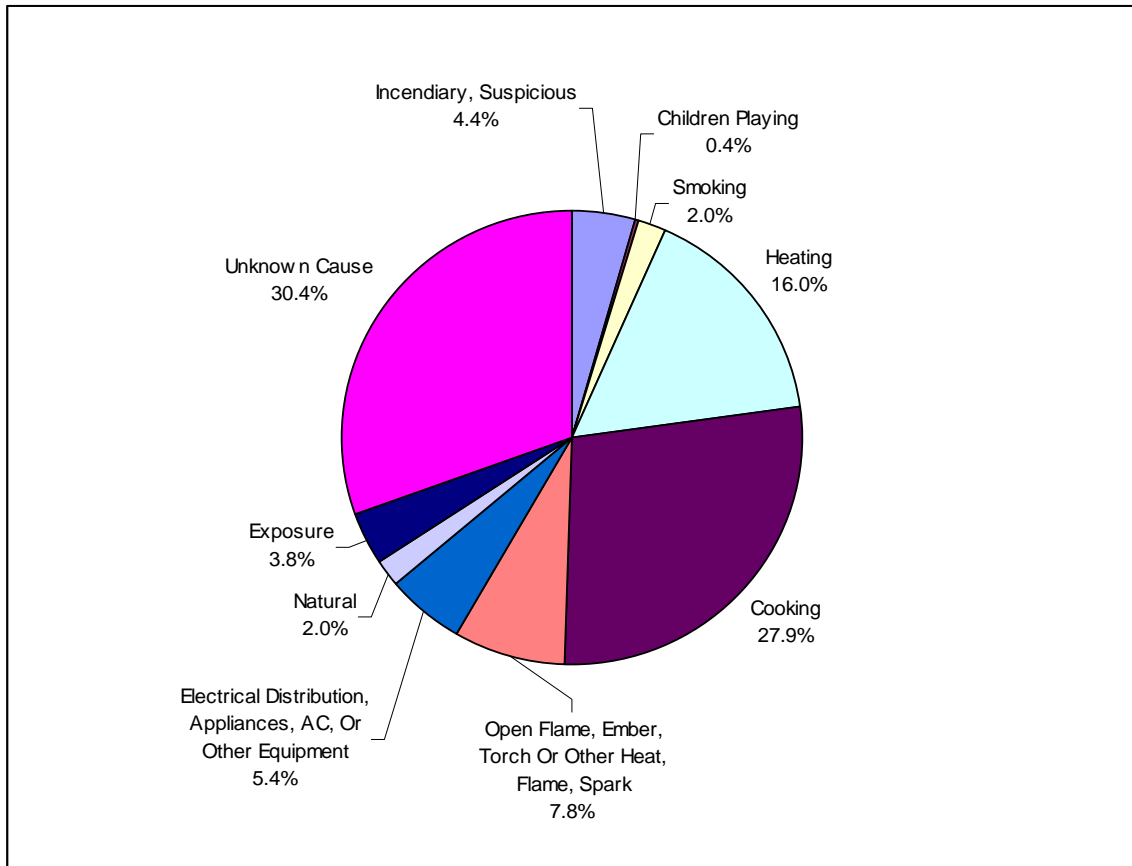


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**Building Fires Data by Building Height, Virginia, 2007**

Number of Stories	Number	Percent	Total Dollar Loss	Civilian and Fire Service Injuries	Civilian and Fire Service Deaths
1	2,419	53.96%	\$98,488,118	153	24
2	1,472	32.84%	\$73,298,781	131	24
3	315	7.03%	\$43,783,205	27	1
4	41	0.91%	\$3,112,305	3	0
5 Or More	120	2.68%	\$2,913,962	12	0
Unknown	116	2.59%	\$3,086,560	8	1
Grand Total	4,483	100.00%	\$224,682,931	334	50

**Residential Structure Fire Causes, Virginia, 2007**



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**Fire Spread Data with Building Fires, Virginia, 2007**

Fire Spread	Number	Percent	Total Dollar Loss	Civilian and Fire Service Injuries	Civilian and Fire Service Deaths
Confined to Object of Origin	1,100	24.42%	\$13,950,819	36	3
Confined to Room of Origin	1,317	29.23%	\$17,132,600	110	7
Confined to Floor of Origin	321	7.13%	\$16,047,255	38	5
Confined to Building of Origin	1,274	28.28%	\$106,887,604	116	27
Beyond Building of Origin	256	5.68%	\$61,496,783	17	8
Unknown	237	5.26%	\$6,310,982	4	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,505</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>\$221,826,043</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>50</b>

**Source and Exposure Fire Data, Virginia, 2007**

	Source Fires	Exposure Fires	Source Fires and Exposures	All Fires
Number	414	680	1,094	33,543
Injuries	45	6	51	624
Deaths	8	0	8	83
Total Dollar Loss	\$23,855,528	\$13,403,523	\$37,259,051	\$324,576,692
Injuries per 1,000 Fires	108.70	8.82	46.62	18.60
Deaths per 1,000 Fires	19.32	0.00	7.31	2.47
Average (Mean) Dollar Loss	\$62,778	\$21,242	\$42,010	\$11,752
Average (Median) Dollar Loss	\$10,000	\$1,700	\$5,850	\$0

**Building Fire Detector Use Summary, Virginia, 2007**

Detector Use	Number	Percent	Civilian Injuries	Civilian Deaths
Detector Operated & Alerted Occupants or Occupants Failed to Respond	2,138	25.44%	92	1
Detector Operated, But Failed to Alert Occupants or There Were No Occupants	1,151	13.70%	26	2
Detector Failed to Operate or Fire Too Small to Activate	756	9.00%	49	16
No Detector Present	1,184	14.09%	39	12
Unknown / Undetermined	3,171	37.73%	56	18
Not Reported	4	0.05%	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,404</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>49</b>

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Note: Data is compiled from information reported to the Virginia Fire Incident Reporting System (VFIRS) for 2007 as 03/31/2008. For all frequency or incident counts, Mutual Aid Given and Exposure incidents were excluded from the numbers. For Casualty statistical information, Mutual Aid Given incidents were included for all Fire Service and excluded for all Civilian data, and, in addition, Exposure incidents were included with all Casualty numbers. For Dollar Loss amounts, Mutual Aid Given incidents were excluded and Exposure incidents were included with the numbers.

Statistical Data with Building Fires on Area of Fire Origin, Heat Source, Cause of Ignition, Building Status and Building Height were calculated using Incident Types 110-112, and 120-123. Fire Spread information was compiled using Incident Types 110, 111, and 120-123. Detector Use Summary Data reflects data using Incident Types 110, 111, 113-118, and 120-123. The total number of building fires may not match all tables due to this criterion.

<sup>†</sup> The source for the different Virginia Regions was the Regional Community Map found at the Virginia State Government website, <http://www.virginia.gov/cmsportal2/>. Data from Military, Federal or Airport Fire Departments were excluded from this grouping.

The Central Region includes the Counties of Albemarle, Amelia, Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, Brunswick, Buckingham, Campbell, Charlotte, Chesterfield, Cumberland, Dinwiddie, Fluvanna, Greene, Greensville, Halifax, Hanover, Henrico, Henry, Louisa, Lunenburg, Madison, Mecklenburg, Nelson, Nottoway, Orange, Pittsylvania, Powhatan, Prince Edward, Prince George, Southampton, and Sussex; and the Cities of Bedford, Charlottesville, Colonial Heights, Danville, Emporia, Franklin, Hopewell, Lynchburg, Martinsville, Petersburg, and Richmond.

The Coastal Region includes the Counties of Accomack, Charles City, Essex, Gloucester, Isle of Wight, James City, King and Queen, King George, King William, Lancaster, Mathews, Middlesex, New Kent, Northampton, Northumberland, Richmond, Surry, Westmoreland and York; and the Cities of Chesapeake, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach, and Williamsburg.

The Mountain Region includes the Counties of Bland, Buchanan, Carroll, Dickenson, Floyd, Franklin, Giles, Grayson, Lee, Montgomery, Patrick, Pulaski, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington, Wise and Wythe; and the Cities of Bristol, Galax, Norton, and Radford.

The Northern Region includes the Counties of Arlington, Caroline, Culpeper, Fairfax, Fauquier, Loudoun, Prince William, Rappahannock, Spotsylvania and Stafford; and the Cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Fredericksburg, Manassas, and Manassas Park.

The Valley Region includes the Counties of Alleghany, Augusta, Bath, Botetourt, Clarke, Craig, Frederick, Highland, Page, Roanoke, Rockbridge, Rockingham, Shenandoah, and Warren; and the Cities of Buena Vista, Covington, Harrisonburg, Lexington, Roanoke, Salem, Staunton, Waynesboro, and Winchester.



### **3.4: Other State Agencies with Fire Related Missions**

#### **3.3.1: Virginia Department of Forestry**

The Virginia Department of Forestry has the responsibility to protect more than 15.8 million of acres of forestland from fire. Their principle goal of the Forest Protection Program is to prevent injury or loss of human life, minimize property damage and protect resources through six components:

- Forest Fire Suppression
- Forest Fire Prevention
- Prescribed Fire Management
- Law Enforcement
- Woodland/Urban Interface Initiative
- Non-Fire Emergency Readiness and Response

#### **3.3.2: Virginia State Police Arson Division**

The General Investigation Section (GIS) of the Bureau is served by seven Field Offices, commanded by a Captain, two Lieutenants, as well as four to six First Sergeants. Each Field Office employs from 10 to 25 Special Agents.

The Chief Arson Investigator (Lieutenant) coordinates activities between the Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) and other investigative agencies throughout the state. Arson investigation training and assistance are provided when requested by localities. BCI employs a number of special agents who have been specifically trained to investigate arson-related matters.

#### **3.3.3: Virginia Department of Emergency Management**

The Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) is charged with the responsibility of protecting the lives and property of Virginia's citizens from emergencies and disasters by coordinating the state's emergency preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery efforts.

**Preparedness** is accomplished through planning and training to effectively deal with different types of disasters. VDEM develops and maintains state emergency plans as blueprints for response to a variety of scenarios and assists communities in developing localized emergency operations plans.

The activation of the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is the **response** component necessary when the local governments need emergency assistance in responding to a crisis. The state expands staffing at the Virginia Emergency Operations Center to coordinate the response efforts and provides status reports to the governor on existing conditions. VDEM also has response capabilities through their Hazardous Materials Officers located in each of the seven divisions. Their role is to help localities on a daily basis with emergency incidents involving Hazardous materials.

After disaster strikes, the citizens need **recovery** assistance so they can return to their normal lives as quickly as possible. VDEM personnel work directly with Federal agencies to identify a number of basic state and federal financial aid programs may be available to displaced residents as the result of a declared incident.

Emergency management goes beyond helping communities recover from a disaster. Preventive measures now can help **mitigate** or lessen future losses. Many repairs can incorporate steps that will reduce or eliminate potential damage.

#### **3.3.4: Office of Commonwealth Preparedness**

The Office of Commonwealth Preparedness (OCP) works with and through others, including federal, state, and local officials, as well as the private sector. Their role is to develop a seamless, coordinated security and preparedness strategy and implementation plan. The office also serves as the liaison between the Governor and the federal Department of Homeland Security.

Mission: The mission of the Secure Commonwealth Initiative is charged with ensuring a safe, secure, and prepared Virginia by developing and overseeing a coordinated prevention, preparedness, response and recovery strategies for natural and man-made disasters and emergencies that encompass federal, state, local, and private entities and the citizens of the Commonwealth.

### **3.4: Fire Associations**

There are several associations dedicated to one area of the fire service or another. Each association has their own mission and provides vital services to their membership. These associations, when standing together can make a significant positive change to the fire service. For this reason the Virginia Fire Services Board and the Department of Fire Programs considers them valuable partners.

#### **3.4.1: Virginia State Firefighter's Association**

The mission of the Virginia State Firefighter's Association (VSFA) includes the following goals:

- To promote and coordinate, with integrity, the interest of its Member Companies in providing fire, rescue, emergency medical services, and other emergency responses for the citizens of Virginia
- To support and enhance the health, safety, and welfare of the firefighter and EMS provider
- To represent the fire and EMS community at all levels of government; to recommend fire prevention activities in the state
- To heighten the public's understanding of the role of the firefighter and EMS provider
- To work with other state and national organizations on issues of mutual concern.

The VSFA also provides other key benefits to its members. A semi-annual color glossy magazine "The Virginia Firefighter" is circulated to the member departments. Members can

elect to participate in a Group Life Insurance program and are supported in time of need by the Ladies Auxiliary. The association is also very active in legislative issues.

### **3.4.2: Virginia Fire Chiefs Association**

The Virginia Fire Chiefs Association, Inc. (VFCA), formerly known as the State Fire Chiefs Association of Virginia, Inc., is an advocate for leadership of emergency response organizations. VFCA provides a comprehensive and integrated statewide public safety effort, thereby enhancing the quality of life for our customers by reducing the effects of fire, medical, and environmental emergencies.

The Association's stated purpose includes the following goals:

- To bring together persons interested in the advancement of the fire service at least once a year to discuss ways of improving life-saving and fire extinguishments procedures
- To assist in research studies
- To serve as the recognized organization for the exchange of ideas, information, knowledge, and experiences affecting the safety of life and property from fires
- To encourage and assist in the development of fire prevention programs in public education in the Commonwealth of Virginia
- To cooperate with all organizations in the promotion of the goals and objectives of the fire service
- To support and encourage the delivery of pre-hospital emergency medical services by the fire service

### **3.4.3: Virginia Professional Fire Fighters**

The Virginia Professional Fire Fighters (VPFF) is an association of local unions of the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF), representing career professional firefighters and paramedics in the Commonwealth of Virginia. VPFF members provide fire protection and emergency medical services to 70% of Virginia's population. VPFF members also provide these and other specialized services at all of Virginia's major airports and several military installations. VPFF members include firefighters, fire officers, fire inspectors, fire investigators, hazardous materials specialists, emergency medical technicians, paramedics, training instructors, water rescue specialists, and 911 dispatchers.

VPFF has been a strong proponent of legislation that would benefit fire and emergency medical service workers throughout the Commonwealth. On a local level, VPFF members focus on issues that are unique to their own local union's needs. In many jurisdictions, this includes lobbying local elected officials and citizens for better equipment, more staffing, and higher pay and benefits. The VPFF and its affiliates sponsor and support a number of charitable endeavors, including Christmas in April, summer camps for burned children, holiday parties for underprivileged kids, and charity golf tournaments.

### **3.4.4: Virginia Fire Prevention Association**

The objectives and purposes of the Virginia Fire Prevention Association (VFPA) include the following goals:

- To promote the development and improvement of the art and science of fire prevention and inspection, as well as the enforcement of the fire prevention laws and codes of the Commonwealth of Virginia and the political subdivisions thereof
- To promote and maintain a high professional standing among its members
- To foster, maintain, and continue educational advancements for and among its members
- To provide a medium for the discussion and exchange of information concerning the methods, techniques, interpretations, and problems related to fire prevention
- To promote compliance with the State Fire Prevention and Control Plan

VFPA has been active in promoting state and local codes and regulations developed to provide safety to life and property from the hazards of fire. Such codes and regulations generally mirror national codes and standards. The Association is also active in code development at the national level by sending key members to the International Code Council meetings across the United States.

#### **3.4.5: VA Chapter International Association of Arson Investigators**

The International Association of Arson Investigators (IAAI) serves as the global resource for fire investigation training, technology, research, and investigation. They are dedicated to improving the professional development of fire and explosion investigators by being the global resource for fire investigation training, technology, and research.

The objectives and purposes of the Virginia Chapter International Association of Arson Investigators include the following goals:

- To unite for mutual benefits those public officials and private persons engaged in the control of arson and kindred crimes
- To provide for exchange of technical information and developments
- To encourage cooperation among public service agencies and associations to further fire prevention and the suppression of crime
- To encourage high professional standards of conduct among arson investigators and to continually strive to eliminate all factors that interfere with administration of crime suppression
- To foster greater professional competence

#### **3.4.6: Virginia Fire Services Council**

The Virginia Fire Service Council (VFSC) facilitates the annual Combined Virginia Emergency Services Legislative Summit. It is the goal of the VFSC to promote unity in the Virginia Emergency Services Community on legislation that will improve the quality of service to the citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia. The VFSC is comprised of representatives from 7 career fire departments, 7 volunteer fire departments, and 7 combination fire departments.

### **3.4.7: Virginia Fire and Life Safety Coalition**

The purpose of Virginia Fire and Life Safety Coalition is to serve as a statewide representative voice to address fire and life safety issues, and to continually improve the level of fire and life safety in the Commonwealth through the following pursuits:

- serving as an advocate for fire and life safety issues
- sharing fire and life safety resources with our peers
- assisting the Virginia Fire Services Board with maintaining the public education section of the Virginia Fire Prevention and Control Document
- assisting state agencies, fire and EMS agencies, allied organizations, and our corporate partners with their fire and life safety programs and efforts
- assisting schools and educators with integrating fire and life safety education into their curricula, and presenting fire and life safety programs to their students
- assisting jurisdictions with developing and delivering community-based fire and life safety education programs
- reviewing, developing, promoting, and sponsoring public fire and life safety educator and juvenile fire-setter training and certification
- supporting burn survivors and the efforts of “burn camps”
- planning annual public educator conferences to offer training, develop skills, and make professional connections
- encouraging the organization of regional coalitions around the state and supporting their continued success.

The Coalition’s constituency is comprised of the citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia, state agencies, fire and EMS agencies, allied agencies, and corporate partners.

### **3.4.8: Virginia Chapter of the International Society of Fire Service Instructors**

The Virginia Chapter of the ISFSI is dedicated to the enhancement of fire service training by providing a forum and mentoring programs to enhance the skills of fire instructors across the state. Membership is dedicated to assuring quality educators for the firefighters of today and tomorrow.

### **3.4.9: Virginia Association of Hazardous Materials Response Specialists**

The Virginia Association of Hazardous Materials Response Specialists (VAHMRS) is the coordinated voice for Haz/Mat Response Team Members throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. Association members exchange information on a statewide basis, interface with national organizations, and develop a common inventory list of resources and promote resource sharing.

It is the goal of the Association to promote standardization of techniques, equipment training, and teams, as well as to unite, for mutual benefit, those persons engaged in offense oriented, Level III response, or support to Level III response teams.

## **4.0: 2008, A NEW BEGINNING**

The Fire Prevention and Control Committee created a system where those interested in the future of fire prevention and fire control, in those areas not already addressed in the Education and Training documents; would have a voice in the future actions to be taken to further protect the citizens of the Commonwealth.

These individuals representing associations, organizations, localities and other state agencies have met to discuss this document and the future of the fire prevention field. Through this cooperative effort this document has been forged.

### **4.1 Recommendations**

The following items are recommendations and guides identified by participants, and endorsed by the action of the Fire Prevention and Control Committee and then the full Virginia Fire Services Board. Some items have been discussed in more detailed with other agencies and entities to give them a voice in the future.

This is a living document to be changed on a regular basis, but to be reviewed at least once a year. As such, the Virginia Department of Fire Programs will keep the current document posted on their website to be accessible to anyone and everyone as a tool for change.

#### **4.1.1 Public Fire & Life Safety Education**

There are several areas where efforts can be enhanced in Public Fire & Life Safety Education. The Fire Prevention and Control Committee make the following recommendations:

##### **4.1.1.1: Improve State Agency National Partnerships.**

Currently there is no one State Agency acting as a partner to national fire and life safety groups, such as USFA, NFPA, LOWE'S Home Safety, and the Home Safety Council, to bring their programs to Virginia and provide them with a point of contact and representative through which their programs can be promulgated in the state. There needs to be an advocate at the state level to resolve this issue and to make every effort to coordinate these efforts.

##### **4.1.1.2: Public Education Materials and Handouts**

In the early and mid 1990's the Virginia Department of Fire Programs was deeply involved in providing materials for K through 12 and for other specialized groups. However, through uncontrollable circumstances that effort has not been duplicated in more than a decade. It is recommended that the Virginia Department of Fire Programs, with the encouragement of the Virginia Fire Services Board, takes steps necessary to produce and make available on their website additional public domain materials for use of public educators and teachers across the state. These materials should be age and grade specific for children from Kindergarten to High School Seniors following nationally recognized guidelines when available.

#### **4.1.1.3: Public Fire & Life Safety Funding**

Public Fire and Life Safety Educators in Virginia need a dependable source of “seed” money to develop local programs and to promulgate state and national programs in their jurisdictions or regions. The Virginia Fire Services Board encourages localities to apply for the use of VFSB Mini-Grants. The Virginia Fire Services Board also requests the VDFP to seek additional grant funding from other local, state, national and private sources that can be used for Public Fire and Life Safety Education.

#### **4.1.1.4: Reporting of Fire Injuries**

There is a need for a better system of reporting fire and burn statistics from hospitals and healthcare. Existing laws require the reporting of gunshot wounds. The Virginia Fire Services Board encourages Public Education and Investigative associations to amend or create existing wording for future legislation. If legislation is identified, the Virginia Fire Services Board encourages the Virginia Department of Fire Programs to seek Governors approval to support such legislation.

#### **4.1.1.5 Adding Public Education to Firefighter Training**

Add public fire and life safety education skills to basic and advanced firefighter or officer training certification requirements, as appropriate, to enhance their professional development and ability to serve the public need. This would certainly leverage a scarce resource and raise the level of the professional firefighter in the public’s view.

#### **4.1.1.6: Residential Sprinkler Systems**

Take steps to educate the building industry and the public in the benefits for residential sprinkler systems. Encourage the promulgation of sections of the Statewide Building Code (SBC) that would require the installation of residential sprinkler systems in all new residential occupancies. If necessary, the Board will support the fire prevention associations in their endeavors to seek legislation that would mandate residential sprinkler systems in new residential occupancies.

#### **4.1.2: Fire Prevention: Seek 100% participation in the Virginia Fire Incident Reporting System**

VFIRS currently provides important information about fire-related incidents in Virginia. The current fire department participation rate of 74% is outstanding and illustrates municipal departments’ strong commitment to this program. The system would, however, be improved by even greater rates of participation. There are numerous ways this participation could be increased, including incentives for participation, mandatory participation, and awareness campaigns aimed at educating non-participating departments about the importance of VFIRS.

#### **4.1.3: Education, Training, and Certification of Fire Personnel**

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Although a function of the Education and Training Committee of the Virginia Fire Services Board this document endorses their work and encourages others to continue in the path of having all programs meet national level of accreditation through the National Professional Qualifications System.

This would not only include all aspects of suppression activities and would encourage the continued support of having all aspects of prevention field included. This would include the following areas already recognized:

- 1031 Fire Inspector, levels I and II
- 1033 Fire Investigator
- 1035 Public Fire and Life Safety Educator levels I & II

Additional programs to consider for the future would be:

- 1031 Fire Inspector, level III
- 1035 Public Fire and Life Safety Educator level III
- 1051 Wildland

There are national programs in other venues as well, encouragement should be sought to adopt such qualification training in the following areas dealing with Forestry:

- P101 Introduction Forestry Education
- P310 Fire Prevention Education 40 hours

#### **4.1.4: Statewide Fire Prevention Code**

It is a proven fact that we save lives through education and code enforcement. Steps taken to enhance and increase both can go a long way in protecting the citizens of the Commonwealth.

##### **4.1.4.1: Fire Codes Code Development and Code Enforcement**

Provide staff support to include the State Fire Marshal on the Fire Boards Code Committee. Ensure that the MOU between the Fire Board and the Board of Housing is kept up to date and utilized by both Boards.

##### **4.1.4.2: Enforcement of Statewide Fire Prevention Code**

The Statewide Fire Prevention Code is not locally adopted and enforced in all areas of the Commonwealth. The Board will encourage localities to adopt the Statewide Fire Prevention Code and employ staff as they have in the Building Officials Offices. Currently the State Fore Marshals Office is responsible for 70% of the land area and 20% of the population. The SFMO has insufficient staffing to adequately serve and protect this population and area of the Commonwealth.

#### **4.1.5: Fire Insurance**

The Board encourages the insurance industry to participate in all aspects of the Fire Board activities. Currently the insurance industry is a mechanism for acquiring the funding necessary for fire training in the Commonwealth. The Fire Programs Fund comes directly from the 1% fee on various insurance premiums. The insurance industry is an active participant in various fire related associations such as the Virginia Chapter of the IAAI and Virginia Chapter of the International Association of Special Investigation Units (IASIU). There is a direct correlation to the insurance industries interest in lowering claims and the level of fire prevention activities in the state. As a team, this contributes to a reduction of loss of property and life as it relates to fire.

#### **4.1.6: Fire and Arson Investigation**

There are several issues that relate directly to the investigation of fires and the improvements that can enhance the overall success of such activities.

##### **4.1.6.1: VFIRS**

In order to obtain a true and accurate picture of the fire problem there is need for 100 percent participation in the submission of the Virginia Fire Incident Reporting System (VFIRS). The second and vital part of this process is the necessity of updating this information as new information becomes available on each incident. This is most prevalent in the fire investigation field. As each investigator completes their assignment it would be necessary for them to go back to the VFIRS and input any new data on the fire origin and cause along with all supporting information such as first material ignited, etc.

##### **4.1.6.2 Uniform Crime Report (UCR)**

Along the same line, each and every fire investigator should be providing the same relevant data to the Uniform Crime Report. If not a reporting entity to this document the local law enforcement will be a participant. This information should be given to that agency for data entry on that report of each arrest on any arson or burning related crime.

##### **4.1.6.3: Fire Marshals with Police Powers receiving Criminal Intelligence**

The state Fusion Center handles the dissemination of Homeland Security issues to local law enforcement agencies. In Virginia, the Fusion Center has now merged with the State Police Criminal Intelligence Unit. This will enhance the distribution of criminal information to local law enforcement agency. Not all local Fire Marshals with police powers receive this information. Efforts need to be made to enable these fire marshals to be placed on the dissemination list to receive this intelligence information.

##### **4.1.6.4: Forensic Training**

The Virginia Fire Marshal Academy has already created a Certified Forensic Fire Investigator (CFFI) Program that consists of many modules, most of which are still under development. It is

the desire of the Fire Prevention and Control Committee to endorse this program and encourage its continued development.

#### **4. 1.6.5: Fire Investigator Burn Buildings**

Currently the training of fire investigators during the Fire Investigator 1033 School consists of the burning of acquired structures to provide the necessary experiences to meet the requisite skills for national accreditation. It is acknowledged that acquired structures are not always the best for such efforts but at the time that is all that is available. It is the desire of the Fire Prevention and Control Committee to encourage the research the possibility of alternate means of providing burn scenes for fire investigator training.

### **5.0: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

The plan will be addressed at each meeting of the Fire Prevention and Control Committee for comments, updates and concerns from both the committee members and stakeholders. This process will result in reaffirming the document and as the need arises, making it a living document. This document will be reviewed in its entirety at least annually. If an item is to have a timeline, the FP&C Committee will establish such time lines with expectations given to staff with approval from the Executive Director.

### **6.0: GLOSSARY**

**Board:** Unless mentioned otherwise the Board shall refer to the Virginia Fire Services Board

**Board of Housing and Community Development:** A state agency reporting to the Secretary of Commerce for the Commonwealth of Virginia. They have the responsibility to promulgate, in conjunction with the Virginia Fire Services Board, the Statewide Fire Prevention Code.

**Coalition:** Unless mentioned otherwise, Coalition shall refer to the Virginia Fire and Life Safety Coalition

**Fire Prevention and Control Committee:** A committee of the Virginia Fire Services Board assigned to review prevention items including the oversight of the Fire Prevention and Control Plan.

**HAZ/TOXMAT:** Hazardous and Toxic Materials

**K through 12:** Refers to educational levels of kindergarten through a senior in High School.

**National Fire Protection Association (NFPA):** A private, international, entity dedicated to fire prevention through the development of fire related codes and standards.

**National Professional Qualifications System:** A series of professional standards that outline expectations for a specific discipline in the fire service from firefighter through fire officers. These standards are written by Committee's established through NFPA, with specific guidance and oversight. Each committee on a specific discipline is comprised of experts from that specific field. Final documents are through a consensus vote which is then offered up for vote by the NFPA membership at their annual meeting. All such documents are offered for peer review by the public.

**National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (Pro Board):** The mission of Pro Board is to establish an internationally recognized means of acknowledging professional achievement in fire service and related fields. Their primary goal is to accredit organizations that certify "uniform" members of public fire departments, both career and volunteer.

**Pro Board:** The National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications

**Statewide Fire Prevention Code (SFPC or FPC):**

SARA Title III establishes requirements for Federal, State and local governments, Indian Tribes, and industry regarding emergency planning and "Community Right-to-Know" reporting on hazardous and toxic chemicals. The Community Right-to-Know provisions help increase the public's knowledge and access to information on chemicals at individual facilities, their uses, and releases into the environment.

**Virginia Department of Emergency Management:** State agency reporting to the Secretariat of Public Safety for the Commonwealth of Virginia. They are responsible for coordinating the state's emergency preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery efforts.

**Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP):** State agency reporting to the Secretariat of Public Safety for the Commonwealth of Virginia. They are charge with many duties from distribution of the Fire Programs Fund to the delivery of training to Virginia's Fire Service.

**Virginia Fire Incident Reporting System (VFIRS):** The reporting system used by the fire service to document all calls and responses. These are detailed reports that allow for the collection of data to be used in prevention efforts, budget preparation, as well as apparatus and equipment use as well as documenting all personnel on the scene. VFIRS is critical to the success of the modern fire service today.

**Virginia Fire Services Board (Board):** The Virginia Fire Services Board is created within the Virginia Department of Fire Programs pursuant to § 9-153.1 of the Code of Virginia as seen below. The Board is comprised of 15 members appointed by the Governor. Board members serve four-year terms.

## **7.0 ACRONYMS**

**BCI:** Bureau of Criminal Investigations

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**CFFI:** Certified Forensic Fire Investigator

**DHCD:** Department of Housing and Community Development

**ED:** Executive Director

**IAFF:** International Association of Fire Fighters

**IASIU:** International Association of Special Investigation Units

**OSHA:** Occupational Safety and Health Administration or Occupational Safety and Health Act

**IAAI:** International Association of Arson Investigators

**ISFSI:** International Society of Fire Service Instructors

**OCP:** Office of Commonwealth Preparedness

**SFMO:** State Fire Marshal's Office

**SARA:** Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act

**SBC:** Statewide Building Code

**SFPC:** Statewide Fire Prevention Code

**TTS:** Training and Technical Services

**UCR:** Uniform Crime Report

**USBC:** Uniform Statewide Building Code

**USFA:** United States Fire Administration

**VAHMRS:** Virginia Association of Hazardous Materials Response Specialists

**VDEM:** Virginia Department of Emergency Management

**VDFP:** Virginia Department of Fire Programs

**VFCA:** Virginia Fire Chief's Association

**VFIRS:** Virginia Fire Incident Reporting System

**VFPA:** Virginia Fire Prevention Association

**VFSC:** Virginia Fire Services Council

**VPBSR:** Virginia Public Building Safety Regulations

**VPFF:** Virginia Professional Fire Fighters

**VSFA:** Virginia State Firefighter's Association

**WUI:** Wildland Urban Interface

## **8.0: ADDENDUM**

The appendices for this document are to reflect different actions on behalf of or recognized by the Fire Prevention and Control Committee of the Virginia Fire Services Board. Since appendices hold no authoritative direction, but instead are, explanatory in nature, they do not require full Board action.

### **8.1: Recommended report from the Virginia Fire & Life Safety Coalition**

Presented here as submitted to the Virginia Fire Services Board. The work and effort taken to create the Public Fire Life Safety document was recognized by the Board and has been praised for its content and intent. Since that document was created, a different direction was taken on the creation of the Fire Prevention and Control Plan. Not wanting to loose the document created by the Coalition it is the desire of the Fire Prevention and Control Committee to include that report in this section of the plan for all to see and use as seen fit to promote fire and life safety across the Commonwealth.

#### **VIRGINIA FIRE SERVICES BOARD FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL PLAN FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY EDUCATION**

##### **Introduction:**

***“The goal of Fire & Life Safety Education programs is to save lives, preserve the quality of life and reduce losses.”***

“Our country has the largest per capita fire mortality rate in the world. If we could only invest some time and a little money into intelligent fire-safety preplanning, we could have the lowest rate of fire and fire mortality in the world.” *Dennis Smith - Dennis Smith's Fire Safety Book 1983*

“America Burning was published in 1972 as a Report of the President's Commission on Fire Prevention and Control. This committee report identified the number one fire problem in America as public apathy and ignorance. The fire service must share the greater part of the responsibility for the public attitude toward the fire problem. If we are to reduce the incidence and the severity of fire, it must be achieved by methods other than the conventional attack by fire suppression forces.” *IFSTA 606 First Edition – Public Fire Education 1979*

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The most dangerous fire and burn hazard in the country is the attitude that “it won’t happen to me.” We know, however, that it can and does happen at the rate of thousands of deaths and burn injuries yearly. Fire still kills more people than all natural disasters combined. Because this attitude does prevail, one of the primary responsibilities of a fire department is to acquaint the public with the fire problem and to educate them on how to avoid the tragedies of fire.

A general awareness of fire should be instilled in the citizens of a community – adults and children alike. By teaching children the ways of prevention, adults of the future will be safer; by educating adults, the community will be safer today. Therefore, the fire department has a responsibility to teach people the skills that can save their lives.

To effectively address the fire and life safety needs of any population, however, the three E’s, education, engineering and enforcement, must be addressed. There are certain fire risks that may be best addressed through educational efforts, while others may be better served by increased enforcement or engineering techniques. Each of the three E’s exerts a synergistic effect on the others, however, and together they are much more effective than individually. Education can be used to promote engineering possibilities such as home fire sprinkler systems. Code enforcement can be used as an opportunity for education. Point-of-sales information tags can tell consumers how to use the safety features engineered into products. Each of the three E’s can contribute to the development of comprehensive, realistic and effective solutions. Collectively, they can reduce the effects of fire, if not prevent them.

Caught up in the daily demands and struggles of work and home life, we often have difficulty finding the time to pause and take a long-range view of the past and present. We do not see the changes that take place around us as much as we feel their effects. One of those areas in which change has occurred gradually but steadily is fire and life safety education.

In the not too distant past, most emphasis was placed on fire suppression. Any other approach to attacking the problem of fire came not in the form of public education but through increasing public awareness. This meant warning of the dangers of fire, appealing to people’s emotions, using “scare tactics” to convince people that fire could be dangerous and deadly.

In the last quarter of a century here in Virginia, efforts have been made not only to make the public aware of fire and life safety problems, but also to educate them, to teach them the appropriate actions to take in case a fire occurs and to prevent fires from starting in the first place.

Traditionally, the most vigorous efforts in education have taken place during the week of October 9, Fire Prevention Week. However, the Fire and Life Safety Educators of the Commonwealth long ago realized that their efforts must be extended throughout the year and not remain concentrated in one specific timeframe. The fire service recognizes that effective education requires repetition and reinforcement.

A significant pattern of change in the Commonwealth relates to the person who is responsible for fire and life safety education. In the past – and still in the present – volunteers, usually men and women in the fire service, donated off-duty time to educate children, citizen groups, the elderly and others. The first full-time civilian fire/life safety education position in Virginia was created in 1975. Since that time, across the Commonwealth, there has emerged in many departments the official position of Fire and Life Safety Educator. As the effectiveness of education has been recognized, fire and life safety education has become a legitimate part of the work of the fire service. Funds have been appropriated and personnel trained for this particular responsibility. Early efforts in education were often scattered and resembled a “shotgun approach.” Now with the onset of designated positions in education, we have assumed a more systematic approach in reducing fires and preventing injury and death.

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True educators are developing the skills of organizing and planning, using sound management of financial, material, and human resources to reach designated goals and objectives, and are marketing fire and life safety by addressing the demonstrated needs of their communities and enlisting the cooperation of its many segments.

In recognizing fire and life safety personnel as instruments of change, it is possible to reach the hard-to-reach, to teach the hard-to-teach, and to promote better engineering and wider enforcement.

**Executive Summary (to be the last thing to do)**

Historical Perspective

- How we make the leap from 87 to 2003, continuity....How we got from there to here
- After review, it did not accurately reflect.
- We have to get better, statistically speaking, National ranking  
Show stats such as  
the number smoke detectors installed in Virginia through programs  
The number of citizens reached through program delivery  
Elderly  
Children

**Current Level of Activity**

During the 1947 President's Conference on Fire Prevention, convened by President Harry S. Truman, the benefits of education as a means to reduce the needless loss of life and property was realized. Many agencies to this day, still have not fully embraced the importance of Fire & Life Safety Education Programs to reduce the devastating affects of fire.

Today, the disparity between the levels of Fire & Life Safety Programs delivered throughout the Commonwealth is overwhelming. This disparity does not necessarily fall along the line of rural vs. metropolitan or volunteer vs. career departments. There are many contributing factors. The greatest factor is the level of commitment realized by the "higher echelon" within any department. The financial support is another contributing factor. However, this is not necessarily relevant to the size or type of department. This can best be demonstrated in the fact that there are a number of smaller volunteer organizations with the commitment to deliver the needed programs. Many of the larger departments with more financial resources have not established programs or dedicated personnel to deliver these programs.

On October 13, 2000 in Lynchburg, Virginia, the Virginia Fire Services Board authorized spending up to 5% of the Aid to Locality Funds for Fire Prevention and Public Safety Education Programs. At present, only a limited number of the departments are willing to utilize any portion of the funding to support educational efforts. If a greater emphasis is placed on the actual utilization of funding for delivery of fire & life safety programs, greater strides can be made in reducing the needless loss of life and property caused by fire and disasters.

The Department of Fire Programs website [www.vafire.com](http://www.vafire.com) is an outstanding resource of information on programs available throughout the state, as well as information on delivery of programs. These programs include all ages from preschool-aged children to senior citizens as well as programs specifically designed for mentally / physically challenged or impaired citizens. Programs include: Fire & Burn Prevention, First Aid, Disaster Preparedness, Child Passenger Safety, Choking and Strangulation Prevention, Water Safety, Fall Prevention, Firearms Safety, Poisoning Prevention, and many more.

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Organizations are utilizing a number of different methods and tools to deliver programs including: robots, life safety houses, costume characters, clowns, school based programs, safety towns & camps, Citizen's Fire Academy, Community Emergency Response Team, Fire Prevention Week Programs, Child Passenger Safety Seat Checks, and many more. In addition, with the increased awareness of juvenile set fires, many departments are offering Juvenile Fire Setter Intervention programs.

Many groups and organizations throughout Virginia are assisting in the delivery of fire & life safety programs, as well as providing training and support for those personnel delivering the fire & life safety programs to the public. Listed below are just a few of those groups:

- The Virginia Fire & Life Safety Coalition
- Tidewater Fire Educator's Network
- Northern Virginia Fire and Life Safety Coalition
- Central Virginia Public Educator's Network
- Shenandoah Valley Fire & Life Safety Network
- Southwest Virginia Fire & Life Safety Coalition
- Safe Kids
- Virginia Department of Fire Programs
- Virginia Department of Health
- Red Cross
- National Fire Protection Association
- United States Fire Administration

Virginia, as a whole, is actively involved and committed to educating the public on fire & life safety issues and concerns. This is made possible by the truly committed cadre of personnel dedicated to the safety of our citizens. Unfortunately, there are still personnel in leadership positions that do not understand or agree with the philosophy of educating the public on fire & life safety issues. With the commitment of the "higher echelon," as well as the appropriate funding dedicated to the delivery of life safety programs, true advances can be made to lessen the effects of fire. To quote President Harry S. Truman, "The serious losses in life and property resulting annually from fires cause me deep concern. I am sure that such unnecessary waste can be reduced. The substantial progress made in the science of fire prevention and fire protection convinces me that the means are available for limiting this unnecessary destruction." His statement was true 56 years ago and is true today. Smart advice, only if we are willing to embrace it.

**Resources**

**The Virginia Fire and Life Safety Coalition partners with the following organizations and groups.**

Regional Coalitions

Shenandoah Virginia

Southwest Virginia

Northern Virginia

Tidewater Virginia

Central Virginia

Virginia Fire Chiefs Association

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA )

Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP)

Virginia Fire Services Board

Virginia Department of Health (VDH)

Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS)

Center for Injury and Violence Prevention (CIVP)

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Medical Reserve Corp (MRC)  
Local Health Departments  
Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC)  
Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)  
State Fire Marshals Office  
Virginia Department of Education (VDE)  
Safe Kids  
State Organization and Local Chapters  
Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)  
Virginia Department of Forestry (VDF)  
Department of Social Services (DSS)  
Virginia Fire Prevention Association (VFPA)  
International Association of Arson Investigators (IAAI)  
Burn Camps  
American Red Cross  
Virginia Water Safety Coalition  
Department of Conservation and Recreation  
Virginia Poison Center Network  
Insurance Companies  
Virginia State Police  
National Fire Academy  
Juvenile Justice System  
National  
State  
Local

Occasionally there may be limited supplemental funding available from the following entities:

Virginia Department of Health (VDH)  
Mini Grants  
Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP)  
Aid to Localities  
Grants  
Certification Training Funding  
Insurance Companies  
Grants  
Materials  
U. S. Department of Forestry  
National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA)  
Department of Homeland Security  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
Local Groups and Organizations

**Public Fire and Life Safety Current Needs**

In Virginia, fires are the 4th leading cause of unintentional injury death. There are more than 20,000 fires and an average of 115 fire deaths per year. The cost of fires in Virginia in terms of property loss is more than \$117 million annually. Children under the age of five and adults over the age 55 are more than twice as likely to die in a fire than the average resident of Virginia. Nearly 90% of unintentional fire deaths in Virginia occur in the home. Residential fires are most commonly caused by careless use of cigarettes, heating and electrical equipment, cooking, candles, leaving combustible materials too close to a heat source, and discarding materials that have not been fully extinguished. These fire causes involve improper human behavior and actions, and all of these behaviors can be improved by education and intervention.

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The citizens of the Commonwealth lack the necessary resources to support the programs designed to ensure their safety from the ravages of fire and disasters. Legislators, educators, members of the fire and emergency medical services, health care providers and the citizens themselves must ask, "What is an acceptable number of injuries and lives lost due to fires and burns in Virginia? Is 50 or 75 lives lost better than 100?" We must strive to prevent them all.

In Virginia someone dies in a fire every three to four days and hospitals admit 500 to 600 more for severe burn injuries annually. Without a single, coordinated, and well-funded state-sponsored effort, we can expect an increase. There are limited concerted efforts and minimal statewide assistance directed to alleviate this problem. Are the citizens of the Commonwealth aware and willing to accept this and is this the best that we can offer our citizens?

The true cost to the Commonwealth from these losses in terms of human suffering cannot be calculated. However, there are direct economic losses and productive years lost that can be tabulated.

In 2000, the last year of the century that saw greater technological advancement than any other, 116 Virginians died due to fires and burns. This represents a rising rate of 1.6 per 100,000. Fourteen, or 19.7%, of these deaths were due to fire flame burns to children under 5 years of age. There were also 526 hospitalizations reported for a total dollar cost of \$9,197,432. The average hospital stay was 7.1 days, and the average charge per stay was \$17,731.

In 1998/1999, there were 1,216 hospitalizations for burn injuries at a total cost of \$15,953,256. The average cost per hospital stay was \$13,119, and these hospital stays averaged 7.1 days. In 1998 alone, there were 107 burn-related deaths representing a total of 2,943 years of productive life lost. This represents a rate of 1.58 per 100,000, and slightly more than fifty percent of lives lost were members of identified at-risk groups of young and older citizens. Virginia's injury death rate for burns resulting from fire/flame was 12% higher than the national injury death rate.

From 1994 to 1997, 92 young people under the age of 20 in Virginia died as a result of fires and burns. This represents a rate of 1.3 per 100,000 for this age group. During this same time period, there were also 582 hospitalizations, with an average charge of more than \$7,300 per hospitalization. The total cost in dollars was more than \$1.1 million per year.

It is evident that the occurrence and the cost of deaths and injuries due to fires and burns in Virginia are steadily rising. When looking at these statistics, it is important to remember that deaths and injuries are not always accurately reported. The numbers used here are factual reports from hospitals, but hospitalization data does not include injuries treated in emergency rooms, urgent care centers, physicians' offices, schools, homes, or other burn injuries that did not require hospital admissions.

Too many times, the media reports and the public accept burn injuries and deaths as an "accident" or an unfortunate part of life. However, fire and life safety educators see these events as "preventable" and "avoidable" through increased awareness and modified human behavior. Increasing awareness and changing people's habits takes considerable time, effort, and resources.

The Commonwealth must dedicate and devote additional resources on a perpetual basis in a genuine effort to assist the fire service, health care providers, allied agencies, and their partners to combat this destructive and debilitating problem. With statewide support, every fire district in the Commonwealth can be proactive.

We must do everything possible to encourage our Virginia legislators to recognize and address these problems. Laws must be created to provide an adequate level of resources that will

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be dedicated solely to fire and life safety education. State agencies must be required to make reducing the incidence and consequences of deaths and injuries due to fires and burns a part of their base mission. Specifically, the Department of Education, the Department of Health, the Fire Marshal's Office which is within the Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Department of Fire Programs can each play a vital role in coordinating programs. Many other agencies can be involved as well. They all need to develop and provide materials in current formats, and assist the fire service and fire & life safety educators in Virginia with professional development and program delivery. These cannot be unfunded mandates.

Currently, the Fire Services Board allows a portion of the Aid to Localities Funds to be used to support public fire and life safety education. Because this funding is limited, it is generally dedicated to suppression operations.

Virginia does not have accurate statistics on burn injuries and deaths. There is a system in place (Virginia Fire Incident Reporting System {VFIRS}) to provide this vital data on not just the injuries but also the mechanism of injury. Presently only two thirds of Virginia's fire departments participate in this reporting system. It is highly recommended that all fire departments in the Commonwealth be required to participate in VFIRS. The ability to receive the Aid to Localities funding should be dependent upon participation in VFIRS. With an accurate reporting system, we can begin to plan proper mitigation programs of education and intervention.

### **Who needs Fire and Life Safety Education**

Each year, fire kills more Americans than all natural disasters combined. The U.S. has one of the highest fire death rates in the industrialized world. For 2001, (exclusive of the events of September 11) the U.S. fire death rate was 13.4 deaths per million population. According to the *United States Fire Administration* the south has the highest fire death rate per-capita with 17.8 civilian deaths per million which is higher than the national average. Therefore, everyone in *Virginia* needs fire and life safety education.

According to national statistics, children under the age of 5 and adults over the age of 55 have been identified as having twice the fire death rate of the national average. These statistics make these two categories of the population our high-risk groups.

Factors in Virginia which affect a person's risk include ethnic diversity which can be correlated to the poverty level. The age of housing and existence of manufactured homes built prior to the 1976 implementation of HUD standards are contributing factors. Education levels, latch key children and alternate heat sources are also risk factors that should be considered.

According to the *National Fire Administration*; men die or are injured in fires almost twice as often as women; African Americans and American Indians have significantly higher death rates per capita than the national average.

It is agreed that the conclusion in "*Solutions 2000*" Report by *Dr. Hall*, states: "We can successfully reduce fire casualties through either prevention or mitigation." Anyone with a vested interest in the health and well-being of special groups can act as an agent of education, engineering and enforcement.

The high-risk population is ever changing (stated in the *Solutions 2000* document) to include hearing impaired, compromised mobility, developmentally limited or impaired. Poverty and education levels correlate to fire death rates. Latch key children are more commonly being left alone at younger ages. This forces these children to make critical life safety decisions. It is imperative that these audiences are a priority for fire and life safety education.

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Fire death rates can also vary by community size; however, one significant incident (ex. 2003, Rhode Island nightclub 100 fire fatalities) can affect the statistics for any community either rural or urban. Communities with populations less than 2500 or greater than 500,000 have the highest fire deaths per million populations.

These target populations can be reached in:

- Pre-schools
- Public and private schools
- Day care centers
- Special events
- Hotels/motels
- Businesses
- Churches
- Civic associations
- Service organizations
- Social services
- Homeowners associations
- Local government agencies
- High risk targeted areas.

Awareness campaigns should include but not be limited to fire and life safety education issues. There are several educational strategies that can be utilized:

- Interactive programs
- School-based programs
- Public safety workshops
- Participation in community events
- Public Service Announcements
- Brochures
- Web pages

Efforts should be placed on enhancing statewide coalitions to continue the development and implement different strategies. The goal of community coalitions throughout the state should be to raise safety expectations and awareness of the above identified high-risk members of each community. These coalitions should exchange resources and information.

### **Legislative Changes**

One of the roles of the fire & life safety educator is to keep the legislators current on issues affecting or related to fire deaths, injuries and property loss. This will enable our legislators to make more informed decisions on new laws and regulations relating to fire and life safety.

### **The Role of the Fire Service**

The fire service in Virginia should be the vanguard of public fire and life safety education. The members of the fire, EMS, and rescue services see first-hand the tragic effects of fire and burn injuries and property losses in their communities and statewide. The best and strongest advocates and practitioners of fire and life safety education bear witness to and/or share in those losses. A large percentage of fire service administrators concentrate a majority of their time and resources on fire suppression operations. The time to address the serious and tragic consequences of fires and burns is before they happen.

When a fire department is called for suppression operations, it is operating in a reactive mode. Education, intervention, engineering and code enforcement, work in unison to create the most effective proactive strategies. When the fire department is called, damage has occurred and life may be lost. Placing emphasis on efforts (both time and fiscal) into fire suppression operations as

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opposed to supporting prevention strategies is less effective in terms of preventing or reducing the numbers of deaths, injuries, and property losses. As a result of this proactive approach, the variables causing firefighter's injuries and deaths will be reduced. Prevention methodology should be the primary mission of the fire service.

Fire and life safety programs, including VFIRS that are outlined in other sections of this document should be used by the fire service to develop their philosophy. In order to succeed, every fire department in Virginia must participate in fire prevention efforts. Jurisdictions must adopt and enforce the Statewide Fire Prevention Code as well as participate in public fire and life safety education and intervention.

Fire departments that have adopted the Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code inspect and work primarily with commercial structures and facilities. There are limited provisions for enforcing safer conditions in private residential properties. While a citizen's right to privacy in the home is protected, we must also acknowledge that 90% of all fire deaths in Virginia occur in the home. That statistic alone supports the concept that the Commonwealth is not effectively delivering and participating in a successful prevention strategy.

Typically, a limited number of fire department personnel and resources are dedicated to fire prevention. In reality, all personnel in the fire service should be well versed in public fire and life safety education. Firefighter job descriptions and training should include delivery techniques and knowledge of positive and effective fire and life safety messages to the public.

### **Role of State Government**

Statewide efforts to reduce injuries and deaths due to fires and burns in Virginia must be coalesced and focused to be effective. Fire and life safety educators in Virginia have come together to form this focal point, but they do not have enough time or resources to be effective on their own. The state government, along with their resources, must step forward and be more proactive to protect the citizens and their quality of life.

The following recommendations were researched as potential improvements towards better fire and life safety education:

- The Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP) needs to reinstitute the position of Public Fire and Life Safety Manager. The primary duty of this position would be to take an active role in fire and life safety initiatives. Their role would include but not be limited to:
  - Development and coordination of certification training activities
  - Facilitation of statewide networking efforts
  - Coordinate state program initiatives
  - Coordinate activities and information from and with other agencies
  - Interpret statistics for public education needs
  - Maintain statistics of certification level training
  - Seek federal and private funding for programs
  - Create and manage a clearinghouse for media resources, concepts, ideas and materials.
  - Partner with the departments such as Education and Health on life safety issues
  - Promote funding for Fire and Life Safety continuing education, both regional and statewide
- VDFP must establish dedicated funding to support the Public Fire and Life Safety Manager. This would include budgetary consideration for support staff, materials, and

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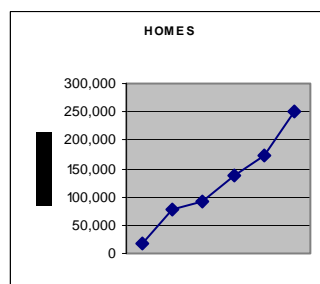
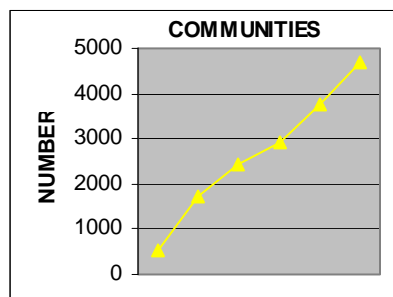
- the delivery of training. This funding must also include sufficient resources for this individual to stay current with their own training and certification.
- The Virginia Fire Services Board should mandate that the “Aid to Localities Funding” should be provided to only those localities that participate in the Virginia Fire Incident Reporting System. The Board should also strongly encourage that a percentage of these funds be used for Public Fire and Life Safety Education activities.
- The State Fire Marshals Office (SFMO) needs to provide:
  - A full time staff member dedicated to public fire and life safety education
  - Educational resources in localities where no Fire and Life Safety Educators exist
  - A Campus Fire and Life Safety Education program for students and faculty
  - Fire and life safety education in conjunction with their inspection program
- The Department of Health should continue to support existing partnerships with state and local fire and life safety educators.
- The Department of Education should include fire and life safety skills and knowledge into the Standards of Learning.
- All new state initiatives related to fire and life safety education should be developed in coordination with Virginia Fire and Life Safety Educators Coalition.

### Wildfire

The primary concern in reference to wildfires in the Commonwealth is the increasing Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). As populations expand in Virginia, human influences on our forests are increasing. As a result, the goods, services, and management of the forests are changing. Such areas of rapid change commonly are referred to as the WUI. Although the interface has been variously defined, perhaps the most common definition is that of an area of urban sprawl where homes or other development press against the boundaries of public or private wildlands or rural areas. From a natural resource perspective, the interface is an area where increased human influence and land use conversion are changing natural resources benefits and management.

Wildland fires that threaten lives and property are perhaps the most obvious problem facing residents in the wildland-urban interface, although there are other equally important issues. For example, as the number of private forest landowners in the south increases, ownership tract size decreases. As a result, managing small-scale tracts for a variety of management objectives becomes problematic. Other examples include watershed management and protection; non-native species proliferation; forest health concerns; wildlife management and conservation; and increased recreation demand. Natural resource professionals currently have limited skills, information, and tools necessary to address the challenges of managing resources in the wildland-urban interface. Local policymakers, planners, and homeowners need scientific information packaged in user-friendly, easily accessible formats for informed decision-making.

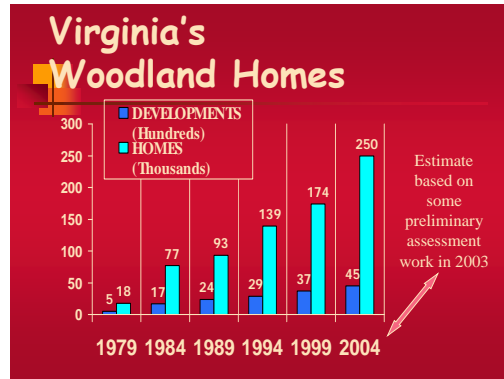
In Virginia, since 1979, the numbers of communities within the WUI have increased nearly 900% and the number of homes within these communities has risen over 1300%.



### WOODLAND HOME SURVEY

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YEAR	# OF DEVELOPMENTS	# OF DWELLINGS
1979	524	18,203
1984	1,712	77,503
1989	2,443	93,271
1994	2,914	139,111
1999	3,743	173,943
2003	4,704	250,000+



Virginia continues to have one of the best wildland records in the south. Our fire-starts and acreages burned have not increased significantly except for those years in which the weather was a major contributing factor. Our 10-year average remains around 1600 fires resulting in 13,000 acres burned. One alarming statistic is that in 2001, for every 11 acres that burned in a wildfire, a home was threatened, damaged or destroyed. A home is considered threatened if it would have burned without suppression intervention. On average, more homes east of the Mississippi are lost each year due to wildfires than are destroyed in the west. Western wildfires are more dramatic due to their size, the speed in which they move, and the fact that hundreds of homes are lost at a time. Here in the east, homes are lost one or two at a time. Additionally many of the homes are not the multi-million dollar homes, which make for the good news stories out west. Apathy or the “we don’t have fires like that” attitude is also a major “hazard” when addressing the needs of the WUI in Virginia.

Due to program and organization changes over the last two decades, there has been a steady decrease in the emphasis placed on wildfire safety and education. This could not have happened at a worst time with the increasing needs that the WUI expansion has placed on the Commonwealth. Grants made available in the last three or four years from the President’s National Fire Plan have been instrumental in renewing Wildfire Safety and Education initiatives Wildfire safety, prevention and education have become a collaborative effort.

#### **Four “R” Approach (Risk, Responsibilities, Rewards and Respect)**

Many emergency response agencies have come together to educate Virginia’s citizens and visitors on wildfire **Risk**. This includes their **Responsibilities** to mitigate the risk, as well as their **Rewards** when appropriate actions are taken. This emphasis has been modified with **Respect** -respecting why people live, build, and landscape the way they choose. . Utilizing this approach and working together, we can make a difference not only in the Wildland Interface, but in all of Virginia.

#### **Role of Partners**

A vital link of delivering fire and life safety education across the Commonwealth is effective utilization of community partners. There are numerous partners on the national, state, and local levels that are available. The role of our partners is to provide technical assistance, advice,

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and share resources. Through networking with these partners, fire departments and fire and life safety educators will be able to provide and deliver programs to a wide variety of audiences across the Commonwealth.

Throughout the United States, there are a number of organizations that are well known that promote fire and life safety. The United States Fire Administration (USFA), the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), Lowe's Home Safety Council, and the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) are just a few to mention. By partnering with different organizations, we can make Virginia a safer place to work and live.

The United States Fire Administration (USFA) is a major resource utilized by Fire and Life Safety Educators across Virginia. In 1971, 12,000 citizens and 250 firefighters lost their lives as the result of fire. Consequently, in 1974, Congress passed the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act. This Act established the USFA and the National Fire Academy (NFA). Through public education, training, research, and data collection, the USFA has been instrumental in reducing the national fire death rate by 50 percent.

Today the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has directed the USFA to reduce life and economic losses due to fire and other related emergencies. To achieve this goal, the USFA provides leadership, advocacy, coordination, and support through partnerships with fire and emergency services. The USFA is committed in its effort to assist Fire and Life Safety Educators in developing comprehensive and sound programs to help citizens of all ages to learn more about fire and life safety. The USFA is a valuable resource to obtain information and programs about various issues related to fire and life safety.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) is an organization that educates the world about fire and life safety. The NFPA teaches people of all ages to make responsible choices regarding fire and life safety. The NFPA selects and sponsors the theme for Fire Prevention Week each year and also offers many different programs for all ages. Two of NFPA's well known programs are "Risk Watch" and "Remembering When." "Risk Watch" is a school based injury prevention curriculum designed for school-aged children 14 and under. "Remembering When" is a fire and fall prevention program for older adults. Both of these programs offered by NFPA are being used in numerous localities in Virginia. NFPA's role is not to teach the programs, but to provide educators with the materials and technical support of how to organize and teach the program. The NFPA has a technical advisory group that is available to give advice or answer any questions. The NFPA has many resources available and has a web site that will allow educators to network with them.

The Lowe's Home Safety Council is an organization and partner that is concerned about making the citizens homes a safer place to live. The role of Lowe's Home Safety Council is to provide information about general home safety, fire safety, disaster preparedness, child safety, senior safety, and other fire and life safety topics. Lowe's Home Safety Council offers materials and brochures that cover all of their safety topics, such as, smoke alarms, carbon monoxide detectors and ground fault circuit interrupters. If a citizen is not sure about a certain item, then they can call a toll free number for advice or technical assistance. Lowe's Home Safety Council is also a partner with NFPA and its "Risk Watch" program. Lowe's Home Improvement Stores also provide smoke alarms to local fire departments at little or no cost, which makes Lowe's a valuable resource. Lowe's Home Safety Council has a web site which allows educators another chance to network.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is an independent federal regulatory agency created by the federal government. The role of the CPSC is to keep the public informed about unreasonable risks of injuries and deaths associated with consumer products. The CPSC is a partner with fire and life safety educators because it keeps educators informed of unsafe/recalled products. The CPSC provides a toll free number for consumers and educators to call if they have

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any questions regarding a consumer product and its safety. Many citizens never learn or hear about product recalls. The CPSC can be a vital link between the citizen and the fire and life safety educator in disseminating vital information.

At the state level, the Virginia Department of Fire Programs and the Virginia Department of Health are partners with Fire and Life Safety Educators. In 1998, they created the grant program entitled "Get Alarmed Virginia." This grant provides smoke alarms to be installed in homes of chosen localities. This program has been credited with saving the lives of 60 citizens from 1998 through 2003.

Each year, Fire and Life Safety Educators from across Virginia assist with local burn camps to provide fun, safe, and exciting activities for young burn survivors. The camps are designed to meet the social, physical, and psychological needs of these children. Fire and Life Safety Educators, firefighters, nurses, and others serve as camp counselors. The camps are provided at no cost to the young burn survivors. Funding for the camps come from donations from various fire departments, Fire and Life Safety Coalitions, and other organizations. Becoming involved with burn survivors provides a realistic perspective of the importance of fire and life safety programs.

The Virginia Department of Health and the Virginia Department of Transportation have partnered with Fire and Life Safety Educators as well as other life safety advocates to develop and provide child passenger safety seat training and checks. Certified technicians educate parents and caregivers about the integrity of safety seats, installation concerns, and the correct use of safety restraints and seat belts. Motor vehicles crashes are the leading cause of injury deaths among children under the age of 15. The role of the partnership is to provide a year-round effort to reduce child passenger deaths and injury.

On the local level, one of the most important partners that can be utilized is the media. The media has the ability to reach the citizens by showing, telling, and writing about fire and life safety education. The media has taken a step forward in the past few years in helping to get the message of fire and life safety to the citizens of Virginia. Historically, the media often had the mind set that for news about fire and life safety issues to be important there had to be a death, severe injury, or some type of disaster. Today the media has become a partner with the fire service becoming more proactive in getting the education message out to the citizens.

Fire and life safety educators are using the media to help tell or show ways that citizens can avoid a tragedy from happening before the fact. One example is the use of the television media partnering with one of the local fire departments in Virginia, showing how young children would react if there was a fire in their home during the middle of the night. When there has been a tragedy, such as a fire, drowning, etc., the media's coverage of the incident is usually concluded by giving or talking about preventative measures that could have been used or followed to prevent such a tragedy.

There are many partners available at the local level that play a role in fire and life safety. Civic organizations, cable television companies, and insurance companies are just a few to mention. These partners can provide valuable resources to carry out the message of fire and life safety to the citizens of their communities and across the Commonwealth.

Civic & service organizations can be a valuable resource to the local fire department and community. These organizations can play a major role in fire and life safety education by providing funding and materials. Local cable television companies are another partner that have a role in fire and life safety education. Many fire departments throughout Virginia use their local cable channel to deliver fire and life safety programs or messages. By using the local cable company, the local fire department or educator can increase the citizens' awareness of fire

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department operations, what programs are available and to disseminate fire and life safety information to the public.

Insurance companies are other community partners that have a role in fire and life safety education. They provide fire and life safety materials to citizens and to fire departments for distribution. Several companies provide a number of videos that are available to fire departments or educators that are very useful in delivering fire and life safety messages to various target audiences. By providing fire and life safety information to the citizens, this can help reduce the number of fire and life safety incidents and casualties.

**Summary**

We need realistic short-term objectives and goals.

We need realistic expectation of what can be accomplished in two years.

We need measurable objectives {goals} (fire primary –secondary other life safety issues)

**8.2: July 1, 2008 Fire-safe cigarettes; civil penalties.**

The following legislation was enacted and became effective July 1, 2008:

Prohibits the manufacture, sale, or offer for sale of cigarettes within the Commonwealth, or to persons located in the Commonwealth, unless the cigarettes have been tested to determine that they meet a performance standard for fire safety. The test predicts the likelihood that a cigarette will ignite material with which it comes in contact. Cigarette manufacturers are required to file a certification with the Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services that their cigarettes meet the mandated performance standard as measured by the prescribed test. Cigarette packages are required to be marked so that compliant cigarettes may be distinguished from those not certified as compliant. The specific mark is determined by the manufacturer, subject to Commissioner approval. This measure provides that cigarettes compliant with similar New York regulations will be compliant with these requirements and that manufacturers may use the same package markings they use in that state. The requirements do not apply to cigarettes sold in North Carolina or South Carolina, or packaged for sale outside the United States.

Manufacturers are assessed a fee of \$250 per brand, the proceeds from which are divided between the Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the State Fire Marshal. Violators are subject to civil penalties. Fees assessed manufacturers and civil penalties collected from violators are deposited in a Cigarette Fire Safety Standard and Firefighter Protection Act Fund, to be split between implementation of this measure and use by the State Fire Marshal in carrying out the Statewide Fire Prevention Code. The measure will become effective 13 months after its enactment, and will expire on the effective date of any federal reduced cigarette ignition propensity standard that preempts the measure.

The provisions of this act shall become effective on January 1, 2010, except that subsection B of § 59.1-293.9 of the Code of Virginia shall become effective on July 1, 2008.

### **8.3: Transfer of the State Fire Marshal**

The following legislation was enacted and became effective July 1, 2008:

§ 9.1-206. State Fire Marshal; qualifications; powers and duties; power to arrest, to procure and serve warrants and to issue summonses; limitation on authority.

The Executive Director of Fire Programs shall employ a State Fire Marshal and other personnel necessary to carry out the provisions of the Statewide Fire Prevention Code (§ [27-94](#) et seq.). The State Fire Marshal and other personnel employed pursuant to this section shall be selected upon the basis of education or experience in administering laws and regulations designed to prevent and eliminate hazards to life and property arising from fire.

The State Fire Marshal shall have the powers and duties prescribed by the Statewide Fire Prevention Code (§ [27-94](#) et seq.), by § [27-61](#), by Board regulation and by the Director. The State Fire Marshal and those persons duly authorized to enforce the Statewide Fire Prevention Code shall have the authority to arrest, to procure and serve warrants of arrests and to issue summonses in the manner authorized by general law for violation of the Statewide Fire Prevention Code. The authority granted in this section shall not be construed to authorize the State Fire Marshal to wear or carry firearms. All personnel employed pursuant to this section shall meet the training requirements set forth for local fire marshals in § [27-34.2](#).